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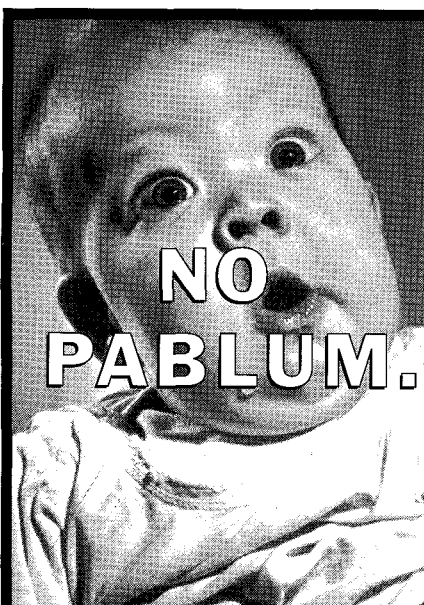
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Alma Guillermoprieto ("Waiting for War," p. 48) lives in Mexico City. Her book "Looking for History: Dispatches from Latin America" came out last year.

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Deirdre McNamer (The Talk of the Town, p. 34) is the author of three novels, including "My Russian." She lives in Missoula, Montana.

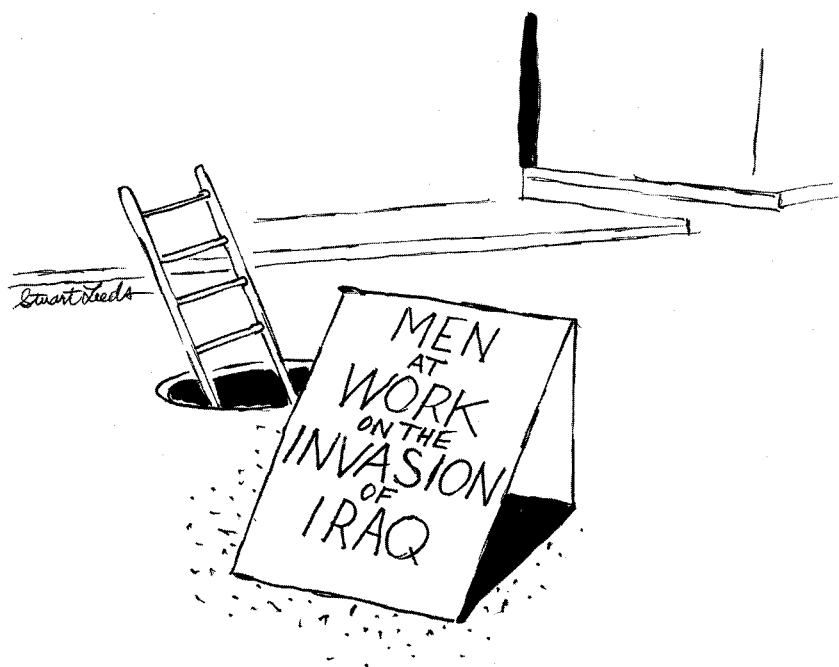
Joe Klein ("After Strom," p. 38) is the author of "The Natural: The Misunderstood Presidency of Bill Clinton," which was published this spring.

Claudia Roth Pierpont (A Critic at Large, p. 86) is the author of "Passionate Minds," a book of essays about women writers.

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Katha Pollitt (Poem, p. 64) is the author, most recently, of "Subject to Debate: Sense and Dissents on Women, Politics, and Culture."

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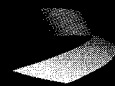


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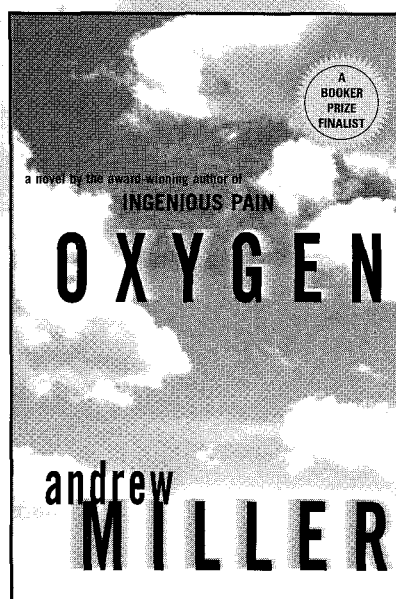
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## THE MAIL

### WHO CREATED BIN LADEN?

Lewis Libby, Vice-President Dick Cheney's chief of staff, suggested to Nicholas Lemann that the Clinton Administration's counterterrorism policy made it "easier for someone like Osama bin Laden to rise up" ("The Next World Order," April 1st). As a former special adviser to President Clinton on national security, I must object. Libby cites the "lack of a serious response" to a laundry list of Clinton-era terrorist incidents, beginning in 1993. Why start then? Why not include the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, which killed seventeen Americans; the 1983 bombing of the Marine compound in Beirut, which killed two hundred and forty-one Americans; the 1986 Berlin disco bombing, which killed an American soldier; and, of course, the 1988 sabotage of Pan Am Flight 103, which killed two hundred and seventy people? Except for very limited action against Libya, the Reagan Administration did not respond militarily to any of these attacks.

Under Clinton, spending on counterterrorism more than doubled; the 1993 World Trade Center bombers were caught; and the largest counterterrorism operation in U.S. history thwarted planned millennium attacks. After the 1998 attack on our embassies in Africa, President Clinton authorized Tomahawk-missile strikes against bin Laden. It is also worth noting reports that the current Bush Administration backed away from some of the more aggressive measures for dealing with Al Qaeda which Clinton had passed on. President Bush has wisely asked that we all work together to strengthen our counterterrorism policy. Playing the blame game doesn't help anyone.

*William Danvers*  
Arlington, Va.

### POPPER'S COMPLAINT

Adam Gopnik's article on Karl Popper was especially interesting for me, as I am the Johansson of the Johansson book

that inspires Popper to tell Gopnik, "He has read nothing of mine, of course. He will then attack this imaginary Popper" (A Critic at Large, April 1st). It might be worth noting that I have copies of letters from Popper to a Swedish publisher that used me as an adviser when it was planning a Swedish Popper volume. In one, from May 8, 1975, he says, "I am very pleased with the selection you are proposing, and very willing to accept these suggestions which obviously come from a scholar who has read my books." Remarkable.

*Ingvar Johansson*  
Professor of Philosophy and Linguistics  
Umeå University  
Umeå, Sweden

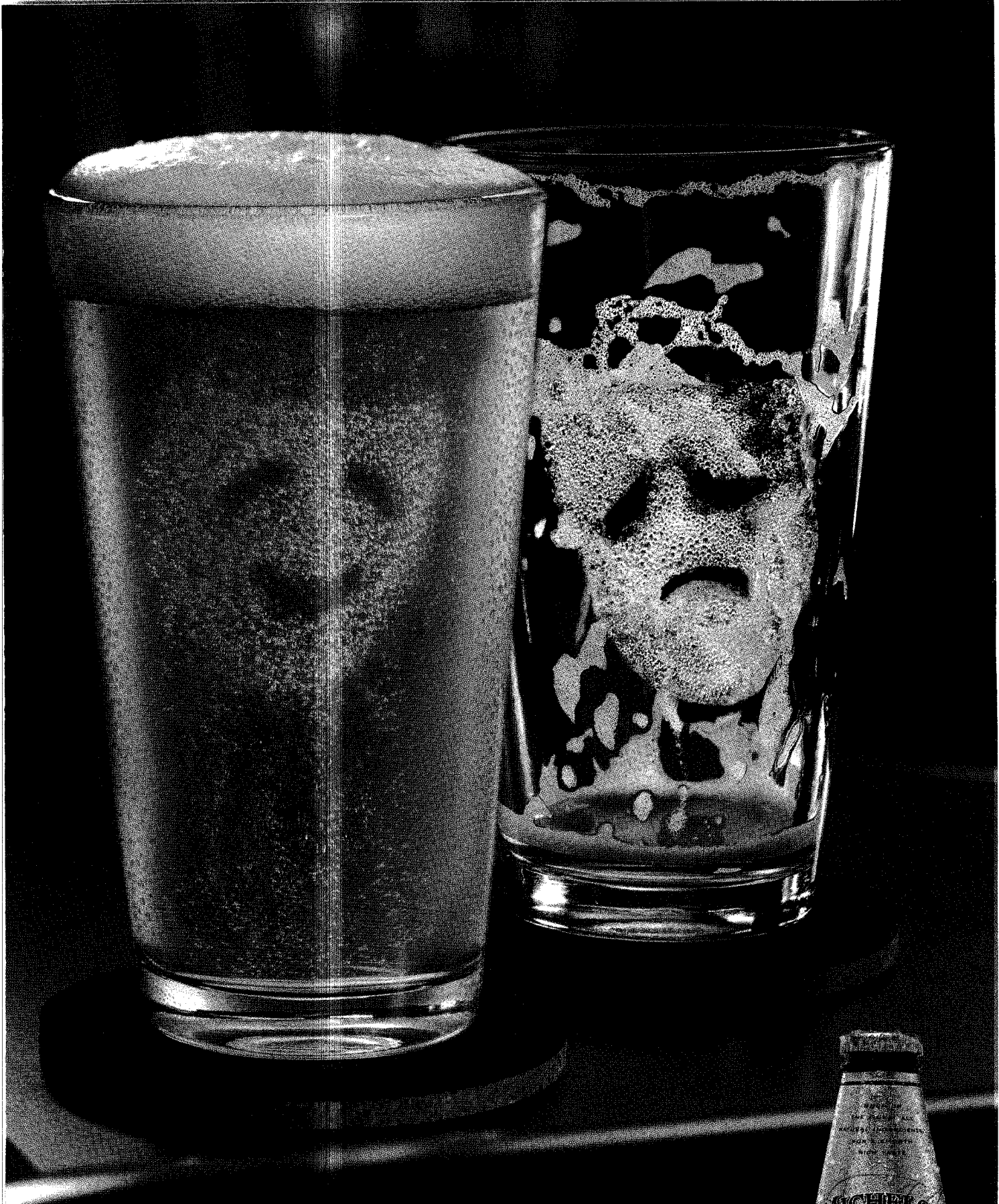
### FOREVER YOUNG

James Surowiecki accuses the advertising industry of "ageism" for favoring younger customers, who are just starting out, over financially better-off baby boomers (The Talk of the Town, April 1st). But he misses two key reasons that advertisers act this way: many young people are early adopters, and many older consumers are wannabes. For of-the-moment products like MP3 players or new beverages, success doesn't require establishing permanent brand loyalty but simply getting people to give the products a try. And, while a fifty-year-old may respond either to a commercial or to what twenty-five-year-olds are drinking, wearing, and driving, few twenty-five-year-olds pick up their elders' trends. For better or worse, there is a fixation on youth in this country. Marketers know what they are doing: they aim young and, if the kids buy what they are selling, as a secondary benefit older adults may come around, too.

*Bruce Bristow*  
Rocky Hill, N.J.

Letters should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number via e-mail to [themail@newyorker.com](mailto:themail@newyorker.com). They can also be faxed to 212-286-5047. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium; we regret that owing to the volume of correspondence we cannot reply to every letter.





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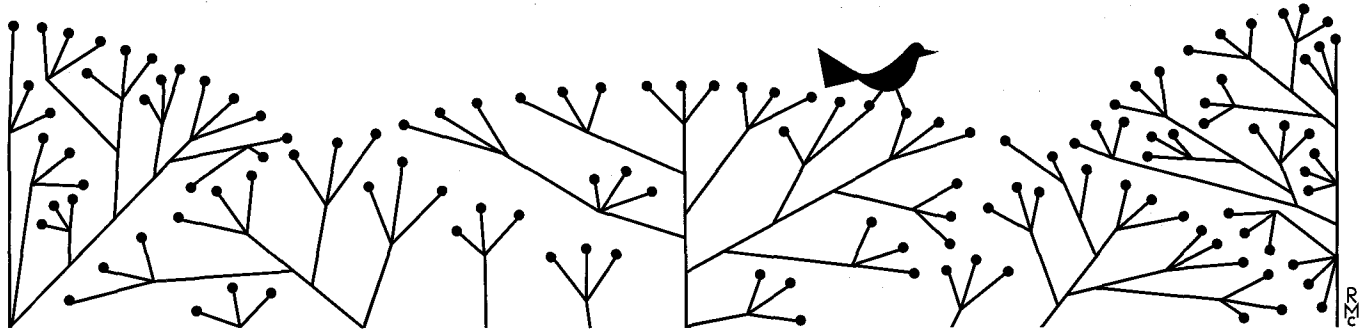
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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



## THE THEATRE OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

### THE ACTING COMPANY

The touring troupe is in town for a brief engagement, presenting Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew" (May 8-12) and "Pudd'nhead Wilson" (May 14-25), an adaptation of Twain's novel. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

### BOYS AND GIRLS

A gay man moves in with two lesbian friends to offer their son a male role model, in a new play by Tom Donaghy. Gerald Gutierrez is the director. In previews. (The Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

### ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE

The first series in this year's six-week marathon of one-acts begins May 8 at 7:30 with plays by Romulus Linney, Lisa-Maria Radano, Billy Aronson, and Brian Silberman. Series A runs through May 19. The marathon continues through June 16. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-4982.)

### A FEW STOUT INDIVIDUALS

A new comedy by John Guare, directed by Michael Grief. In previews through May 11. Opens May 12 at 7. (Signature, 555 W. 42nd St. 244-7529.)

### HOUSE AND GARDEN

A pair of conjoined plays, performed simultaneously on two stages, by Alan Ayckbourn. John Tillinger is the director. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

### ONCE ON THIS ISLAND

The original Broadway cast of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty's 1990 musical reunite for two performances, to benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. May 12 at 3 and 8. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 840-0770.)

### ONE SHOT, ONE KILL

Richard Vetere's play is set at the U.S. Marine base in Quantico, Virginia, where Beirut- and Vietnam-seasoned snipers are training young recruits. In previews. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

### SMELLING A RAT

The New Group takes on another Mike Leigh play, about a successful exterminator who returns from vacation to find a rude surprise in his penthouse apartment. Scott Elliott is the director. In previews. (Samuel Beckett, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

### THIS THING OF DARKNESS

The Atlantic Theatre Company wraps up the season with a drama written by Craig Lucas and David Schulner. In previews. (336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

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| 12 | 13 | 14 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

**21 DOG YEARS: DOING TIME@AMAZON.COM**  
In his solo show, Mike Daisey exposes life at the online giant during its early years. Preview on May 8. Opens May 9 at 7. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

## OPENED RECENTLY

### ... AND THEN YOU GO ON: AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE WORKS OF SAMUEL BECKETT

This one-man show, written and performed by Bob Jaffe, incorporates passages from thirteen Beckett works. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes May 19.)

### BLUE SURGE

Two cops bust a massage parlor and, natch, fall for the bimbos inside. As the hapless teen-age hooker who changes the upwardly striving cop's life for the worse, Rachel Miner is especially impressive at conveying the underlying message here—at the end of a tunnel it can be even darker. Rebecca Gilman writes good scenes, but the director Robert Falls doesn't make them pop. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

### THE CARPETBAGGER'S CHILDREN

Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote, and Roberta Maxwell portray three daughters of a Union soldier, in a new play by Horton Foote. Michael Wilson is the director. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/10/01.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

### THE CRUCIBLE

A masterly revival by Richard Eyre of Arthur Miller's drama about the Salem witch-hunt of 1692, an allegory for the blacklisting delirium of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Abigail Williams (the edgy, excellent Angela Bettis), an orphaned seventeen-year-old Puritan, has been seen dancing in the woods trying to cast a spell over the wife (the expert Laura Linney) of her thirty-five-year-old lover and former employer, John Proctor (Liam Neeson, who is a force of nature). Miller demonstrates the hysteric turning herself into an event in order to preserve a sense of goodness and to project her dark, violent, repressed feelings onto others. (3/18/02) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

### THE DAZZLE

The terrific playwright Richard Greenberg has reimagined the fatal flaws of the infamous Collyer brothers—whose decaying bodies were discovered in their Harlem town house in 1947 buried beneath a lifetime collection of junk—with mixed results. His play is extremely long on longueurs (in the end, neurotics are actually pretty boring), but thanks to fine performances by the heretofore underrated Reg Rogers, as a concert pianist, and Peter Frechette, as his protective lawyer brother, it has numerous moments of funny-sad clarity. (Gramercy, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100. Closes May 12.)

### ELAINE STRITCH AT LIBERTY

In her extraordinary one-woman show (co-created with *The New Yorker's* theatre critic John Lahr), Stritchie, as Noël Coward called her, once and for all confirms her status as a living legend. As she sings songs and tells tales about the ups and downs of her long life in the theatre, she ends up capturing more than a single lifetime; her show is the synthesis of so much that is rich and rewarding and heartbreaking about life on the stage. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. Closes May 26.)

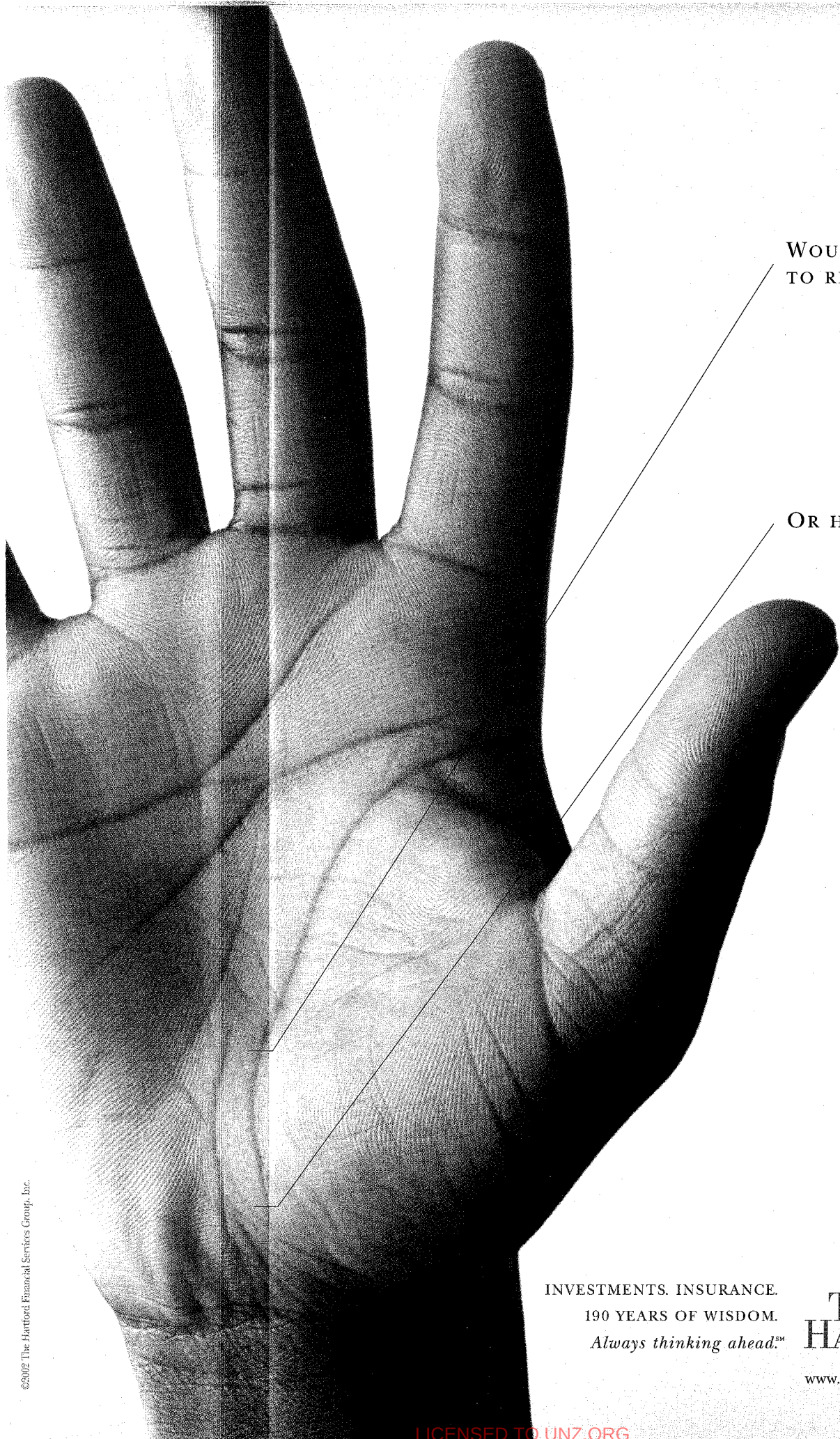
### THE ELEPHANT MAN

Thanks to the 1980 David Lynch movie, just about everyone is familiar with the story of Victorian London's John Merrick, the Elephant Man, whose grotesque deformity took him from a cruel life in freak shows to a less cruel life among the medical community and the curious upper crust. Bernard Pomerance's 1979 play came first; today it seems a bit didactic, but it is still very moving, and the issues that it raises—about faith, colonialism, charity, sexuality—are just as thought provoking. Billy Crudup does a wonderful job as Merrick, a role played without the aid of theatrical prosthetics, and so does Rupert Graves as Frederick Treves, the surgeon who takes him in. Sean Mathias is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

### FORTUNE'S FOOL

Turgenev's little-known 1848 play, set at a Russian country estate, has to do with the way that both meanings of the word "fortune"—fate and finances—hinge and impinge on each other. Alan Bates is a down-on-his-luck gentleman living on the estate, and Frank Langella is his wealthy, arrogant neighbor, accurately characterized as an "infamous, fatuous fop." (He could be the love child of Gore Vidal and Dame Edna.) Just as their characters represent the gamut of the negative qualities of the ruling class, Langella and Bates seem to use up all the acting possibilities in the play as they goad and react to each other; from the moment they first appear on the stage together, it becomes almost unnecessary for anyone else to be present, so completely do they dominate the evening. Directed by Arthur Penn, mak-





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ing his first Broadway foray in twenty years. (4/15/02) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

#### THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?

Left to his own devices, without society's rules or the superego's tyrannical eye, homo sapiens would shtup mud. Or so Edward Albee contends in his ninety-minute anecdote about a happily married, successful architect who falls in love with a goat called Sylvia. It takes all of Albee's expertise to tease this joke into an evening; but it allows Mercedes Ruehl some hilarious moments of high dudgeon as she trashes the house and her husband for "cruising livestock." David Esbjornson is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

#### THE GODFADDA WORKOUT

A one-man show written and performed by Seth Isler. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

#### THE GOLEM

Robert Prosky stars in H. Leivick's 1921 version of the legend of the Golem of Prague, in which a sixteenth-century rabbi defies God to protect his people from attack. Lawrence Sacharow is the director. (Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 239-6200. Closes May 12.)

#### THE GRADUATE

This pointless production, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, was a hit in London, but the flap must have gone out of its wings during the transatlantic journey. Turner's first scene with the young Benjamin Braddock (Jason Biggs, of "American Pie" fame), intended to pave the way for seduction, is endless and full of dead air, and it turns out to be an accurate indicator of things to come. There are exactly two pleasures here: Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father; they depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. Terry Johnson, who directed, adapted the novel and the screenplay, and we'll never understand why. (4/15/02) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

#### THE GUYS

In Anne Nelson's drama, an editor helps a fire captain write eulogies for eight of his men killed in the September 11th attacks. Jim Simpson is the director. (The Flea, 41 White St. 226-2407.)

#### INTO THE WOODS

Stephen Sondheim's 1987 musical examination of fairy-tale archetypes stars Vanessa Williams and John McMartin. James Lapine, who wrote the book, is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

#### A LETTER FROM ETHEL KENNEDY

MCC Theatre presents a comedy by Christopher Gorman, set during pre-matinee lunches in Manhattan's theatre district. Joanna Gleason is the director. (120 W. 28th St. 206-1515.)

#### THE MAN WHO HAD ALL THE LUCK

A revival of Arthur Miller's 1940 drama. (Reviewed in this issue.) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

#### METAMORPHOSES

Ovid's tales, loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods in a swimming pool. The elegant, surreal playfulness of the stage picture broadcasts the tone of Zimmerman's deft direction and her vernacular reinventions. The show is fun and full of wonder, but it illustrates rather than dramatizes psychic struggle. The show's gimmick, the pool, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. (3/18/02) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

#### MR. GOLDWYN

As an exercise in hagiography, this play about the Hollywood mogul and legendary maestro of the malaprop, written by Marsha Lebbly and John Lollo, makes A&E's "Biography" look edgy. The show has no dramatic trajectory, no psychological insight, and no second act. (3/25/02) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

#### MORNING'S AT SEVEN

The question all of the characters in this revival of Paul Osborne's 1939 back-porch drama ask one way or another is: What am I going to do with my life? This is commercial Broadway fare, so everybody gets their answer within two hours. It's bland stuff, sort of Chekhov light, but the pleasing all-star cast (Elizabeth Franz, Julie Hagerty, Buck

Henry, Piper Laurie, Christopher Lloyd, William Biff McGuire, Estelle Parsons, Frances Sternhagen, and Stephen Tobolowsky) puts this rickety workhorse through its paces. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

#### THE MURALS OF ROCKEFELLER CENTER

The painter Diego Rivera, John D. Rockefeller, and a controversial portrait of Lenin are at the center of this Irondale Ensemble Project drama. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 718-488-9233. Closes May 18.)



"21 Dog Years: Doing Time@Amazon.com," a one-man show by Mike Daisey.

#### THE MYSTERY OF CHARLES DICKENS

Simon Callow portrays the author and forty-nine of his characters, in a one-man show written by Peter Ackroyd. (Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

#### THE ODYSSEY

Derek Walcott's adaptation of Homer's epic poem, in a Willow Cabin Theatre Company production. Edward Berkeley is the director. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200. Closes June 2.)

#### OKLAHOMA!

There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's award-winning version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set, which immediately submerges us in a gorgeous world of folk innocence. But technique, which can make a show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

#### PEARL THEATRE COMPANY

Presenting "Romeo and Juliet" and "Much Ado About Nothing" in repertory. (80 St. Mark's Pl. 598-9802.)

#### PIGTOWN

A Limerick pork butcher recalls life in twentieth-century Ireland, in a play by Mike Finn. Charlotte Moore is the director. (Irish Rep, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

#### PRIVATE LIVES

In Noël Coward's comedy of bad manners, two wonderful actors, Alan Rickman and Lindsay Duncan, play the embattled exes Elyot and Amanda—dandies of detachment who jilt their new spouses and run away together to a Parisian love nest. The play's emotional and structural minimalism turns

all the cumbersome proprieties of English drawing-room drama upside down, and Rickman and Duncan have a field day with Coward's nuanced silences, with all the verbal tics and physical revelations of repressed feeling. They understand and convey the essential spiritual conundrum of their post-First World War characters, who are at once overexerted and underinvolved, do no real work, and have no faith, no principles, and no commitment to anything but their own pleasure. Howard Davies's radical notion is to play Elyot and Aman-

da's physical passion for real, rather than opting for the standard notional sexual allure. This allows him to capitalize on the wonderful chemistry between Rickman and Duncan, but it also throws the comedy weirdly off kilter. (5/6/02) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

#### QED

Peter Parnell's play, starring Alan Alda as the physicist Richard Feynman, buzzes with life. Set in 1986—the year of the Challenger explosion, whose causes Feynman helped to investigate—"QED" takes us through an afternoon and evening in Feynman's office at Caltech, where he talks about such subjects as photons, drumming, the Manhattan Project, cancer, and "South Pacific." Alda's performance, which makes much use of that scrunchy-eyed smile of his, is one of utter charm. Sundays and Mondays only. (11/26/01) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

#### READING HEBRON

A Canadian Jew tries to make sense of the Hebron Massacre, in a play by Jason Sherman. (Access Theatre, 380 Broadway, at White St. 206-1515.)

#### RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM

The sleight-of-hand artist returns to New York with a new show, directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

#### THE SANDMAN

From the Target Margin Theatre, a new opera based on E. T. A. Hoffman's nineteenth-century story about a young man haunted by a childhood fear. (Connelly Theatre, 220 E. 4th St. 358-3657.)

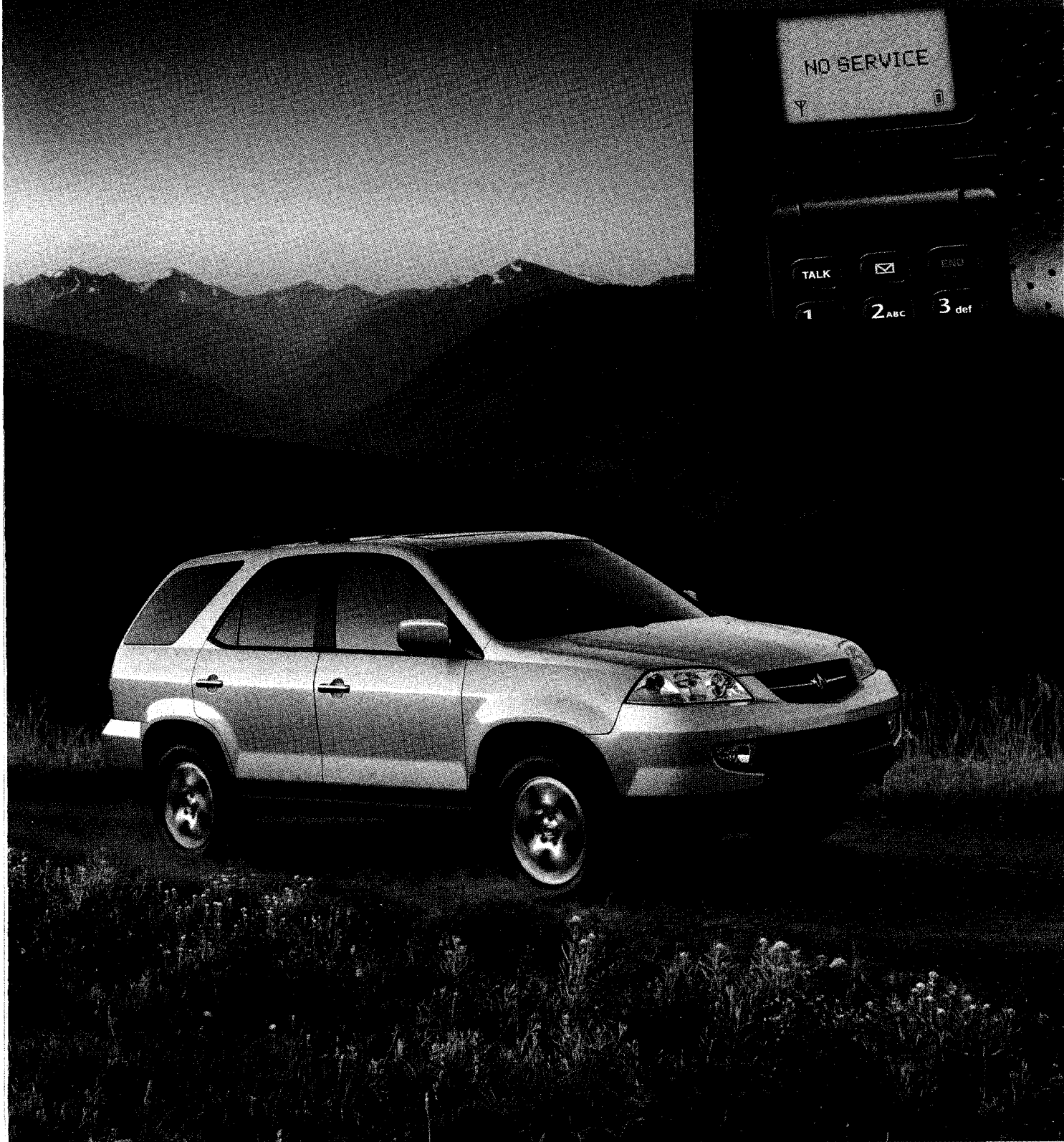
#### SURVIVING GRACE

A play by Trish Vradenburg, about a fraught mother-and-daughter relationship. Illeana Douglas and Doris Belack star. Jack Hofiss directs. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-7171.)

MICHAEL WELDON



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# SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

At first glance, this new musical, adapted from the excellent Clifford Odets-Ernest Lehman movie (1957) by a high-powered artistic team headed by the director Nicholas Hytner, seems to have got it right. The New York gossip columnist Walter Winchell's insatiable, driven personality makes him perfect material for the Broadway musical (he was the inspiration for the character J. J. Hunsecker, played by the expert John Lithgow), and John Guare, who wrote the book, has a clear bead on the material's potent mixture of comic and craven. Unfortunately, the wit of the book is not sustained in Marvin Hamlisch's soft, undistinguished score and Craig Carnelia's flat lyrics. (3/25/02) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

# 3 DARK TALES

The international company Theatre O's "tragic-comedy in three movements," about the deteriorating lives of some office workers. (45 Bleecker, 45 Bleecker St. 307-4100.)

# THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE

A 1967 Hollywood version of the Roaring Twenties—which starred Julie Andrews as an ingenue-flapper who comes to New York City, finds true love, and helps break up a Chinese-run white-slavery ring—reimagined for the stage in 2002. Just like the movie, it's supposed to be all madcap Jazz Age fizziness, but the harder the cast sings and dances, the flatter the enterprise falls. The colors seem garish rather than gay, the manic energy feels forced at gunpoint, and the only thing you recall about Sutton Foster's Millie after you leave the theatre is her huge white teeth and bouncy black bob. Call it thoroughly boring, shrilly. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

# TOPDOG/UNDERDOG

The Public Theatre's production of Suzan-Lori Parks's play has moved to Broadway, starring Jeffrey Wright and Mos Def. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

middle-class absurdities and adds some wise nonsense of his own. (4/15/02) (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes May 12.)

# VIENNA LUSTHAUS (REVISITED)

The choreographer and director Martha Clarke, the playwright Charles L. Mee, and the composer Richard Peaslee's revised version of their 1986 collaboration, a multimedia exploration of Vienna in the early twentieth century. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200.)

# DANCE

## NEW YORK CITY BALLET

May 8 at 7:30, the spring gala: The premières of "Bach Concerto V" and "The Infernal Machine," by Peter Martins, and of "Vespro," by Mauro Bigonzetti, and a preview of a new work by Albert Evans, on a program with "Red Angels" and "Jeu de Cartes." ♦ May 9 at 8: "Correlazione," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Vienna Waltzes." ♦ May 10 at 8: "Vespro," "Morgen," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." ♦ May 11 at 2: "Reunions," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "In G Major," and "Vienna Waltzes." ♦ May 11 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Morgen," and "In G Major." ♦ May 12 at 3: "Mozartiana," "Jeu de Cartes," and "Fancy Free." ♦ May 14 at 7:30: "Viola Alone," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Vienna Waltzes." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 30.)

## AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

May 13 at 6:30: The opening-night gala. ♦ May 14 at 8: "Onegin." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 6.)

## "INDISPUTABLY MARTHA GRAHAM"

It's true: it's impossible to miss who came up with the groin-driven mythopoeia of "Night Journey" (which features Jocasta and Oedipus doing it) or "Embattled Garden," (in which Adam, Eve, the

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Ron Brown. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 7-10 at 8, May 11 at 2 and 8, and May 12 at 2 and 7:30.)

## TERE O'CONNOR DANCE

"The first thing about dance is that it's voiceless," the choreographer says. "That's the drama inherent in the form." After a four-year foray into dances with talk, which he says "enhanced my understanding of choreography as an imagined grammar," O'Connor returns this season with two pieces that are palpably and profoundly mute. The dancers' gestures beg for explanation and refuse to supply it, or at least not straightforwardly. One woman brings her wrist to her lips; another strokes the undersides of someone's arms; all seven dancers tilt their heads as if listening for rain. O'Connor says, "I'm trying to find a symbolism that is more ample than words." Here, he has ploughed the art form's potential for leaving us in the dark—and for shedding light into it. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. May 9-12 at 8:30. Through May 19.)

## DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM

The company returns home, with two weekends' worth of repertory. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 531-5305. May 10 at 7:30, May 11 at 2 and 7:30, and May 12 at 3. Through May 19.)



## H. T. CHEN & DANCERS

In two works: the première of "The Dream," a trio for two women and a man, and "Meditations of a Drunken Peacock," based on an eleventh-century poem by Sun To Po. (Mulberry Street Theatre, 70 Mulberry St. 349-0126. May 9-12 at 8. Through May 19.)

## NIGHT LIFE CONCERTS

### KID ROCK

By fusing old-school hip-hop with potty-mouthed heavy metal and Southern rock, the Detroit kid refreshingly deviates from the scowling norm. A redneck swagger and a sense of humor, admittedly juvenile, are his stock in trade. (Madison Square Garden. 307-7171. May 10 at 8.)

### RAY ANDERSON

The extroverted jazz trombonist is a vociferous improviser who tempers avant-garde inclinations with down-home funk and blues. (Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, 58 Seventh Ave., Park Slope. 718-622-3300. May 11 at 8.)

## CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

### B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL

237 W. 42nd St. (997-4144)—May 9: The Edgar Winter Group, the creators of the radio anthem "Free Ride," recall the seventies.



"3 Dark Tales," by the international troupe Theatre O, at 45 Bleecker.

## THE UNDERPANTS

Has there ever been a more promising title for a play? After all, no other garment is so close to the facts and the concomitant follies of life. Steve Martin has adapted Carl Sternheim's satirical 1911 play, which deals with the consequences of an embarrassing event: a woman's underpants fall down in public, while she is watching a royal parade. The woman's husband (Byron Jennings), a respectable government clerk, is mortified, but the mishap has, if anything, newly awakened his wife (Cheryl Lynn Bowers) to life's possibilities, which include the several men who show up wanting to rent a room from them. The production suffers somewhat from Barry Edelstein's oppressively noisy direction, but Martin's work is inspired; he brings out the play's

serpent, and Lilith take turns doing it, too). This gala, with a program that features three Freudian epics dressed in heavily symbolic Noguchi sets and props, is full-throttle Graham. But what is in dispute is the import of this Graham-company show. Since April 22, the troupe's lawyers have been in court defending its rights, against the claims of Ron Protas, a Graham protégé, to the Graham dances. Time will tell whether this engagement proves to be a march of triumph or a dark swan song. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. May 9 at 8.)

## PHILADANCO

The Philadelphia-based company presents four works: the premières of "Enemy Behind the Gates," by Christopher Huggins, and "My Science," by Bebe Miller, and repertory works by



#### BOWERY BALLROOM

6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—May 8: The members of the **Dirty Dozen Brass Band** are all-star Crescent City revisionists who put the stomp into everything they play, from Jelly Roll Morton to Michael Jackson. The Dozen are celebrating their twenty-fifth year of funk with a new CD, "Medicated Magic," which features guest appearances by Dr. John, Olu Dara, and the astounding pedal steel guitarist Robert Randolph. James Brown aside, the Brass Band's tuba player may be the hardest-working man in show business. May 10-11: The crooked grin and dusty-booted songs of **Jerry Jeff Walker**, who is perhaps still best known for his early-seventies ode to a fellow named Bojangles. May 13: **El-P** currently works as a producer and independent-record-label founder—his Def Jux boasts two of the hip-hop underground's brightest stars, Cannibal Ox and Aesop Rock (which is also appearing here)—but in the mid-nineties, as the lead m.c. in the group Company Flow, he astounded audiences with the blunt force of their debut, "Funcrusher Plus." El-P's rapping style creates a tension that's often released with punchy choruses. He should be in fine form here as he celebrates the release of his new album, "Fantastic Damage."

#### FEZ

380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—May 8: The **Howard Fishman** quartet. The guitarist and gravel-voiced singer Fishman continues his storybook journey from subway musician to cabaret sensation to aspiring rock musician. His band's latest release, "Do What I Want," features for the first time drums, electric guitars, and the like. May 10: **The Bootleg Remedy**. The ethnomusicologist, composer, and banjo player David Gould leads this Brooklyn-based band through a rousing set of bluegrass, Dixieland, and Western-swing songs in honor of its sophomore album, "Cutting Time." Tubas, trombones, violins, and kazoos are promised. Good times are assured. Lending support are a few fellow-travellers in the old-time-music world, including **Waldo's Novelty Syncopators**, led by the ragtime specialist Terry Waldo. The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

#### GALAPAGOS

70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg (718-782-5188)—May 8: The down-home local quintet **Kings County Queens** plays country music genuinely, without undue affectation, yet they know how to stretch the genre to serve their own purposes. The band is celebrating the release of its first album, "Big Ideas," a mixture of covers and strong original songwriting, which features such warm touches as accordion, upright bass, lap steel guitar, and baritone ukulele.

#### IRVING PLAZA

17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—May 9: For a while, **Cornershop** balanced cutting-edge British rock and dance sounds with elements of leader Tjinder Singh's Punjabi culture. After releasing the breakthrough single "Brimful of Asha," they metamorphosed, briefly, into the political funk band Clinton; Cornershop's new album, "Handcream for a Generation," keeps the disco spirit alive. May 12-13: **Pennywise**. Thanks to a shifting lineup and other, more serious internal problems, these hardcore purists missed the big payday that swept up their California peers Green Day and the Offspring during the mid-nineties, but their blend of populist, chant-heavy punk rock and their extreme-sports sensibility has secured them a place in the hearts of skateboarders of all ages.

#### LIVING ROOM

84 Stanton St. (533-7235)—May 12: The accordionist **Rico Bell** takes a break from his regular band, the Mekons, for a scaled-down, and perhaps less rowdy, acoustic show. His soulful performances are a do-it-yourself roots-rock marvel—spirited, raw, and evocative of his rainy hometown, Liverpool.

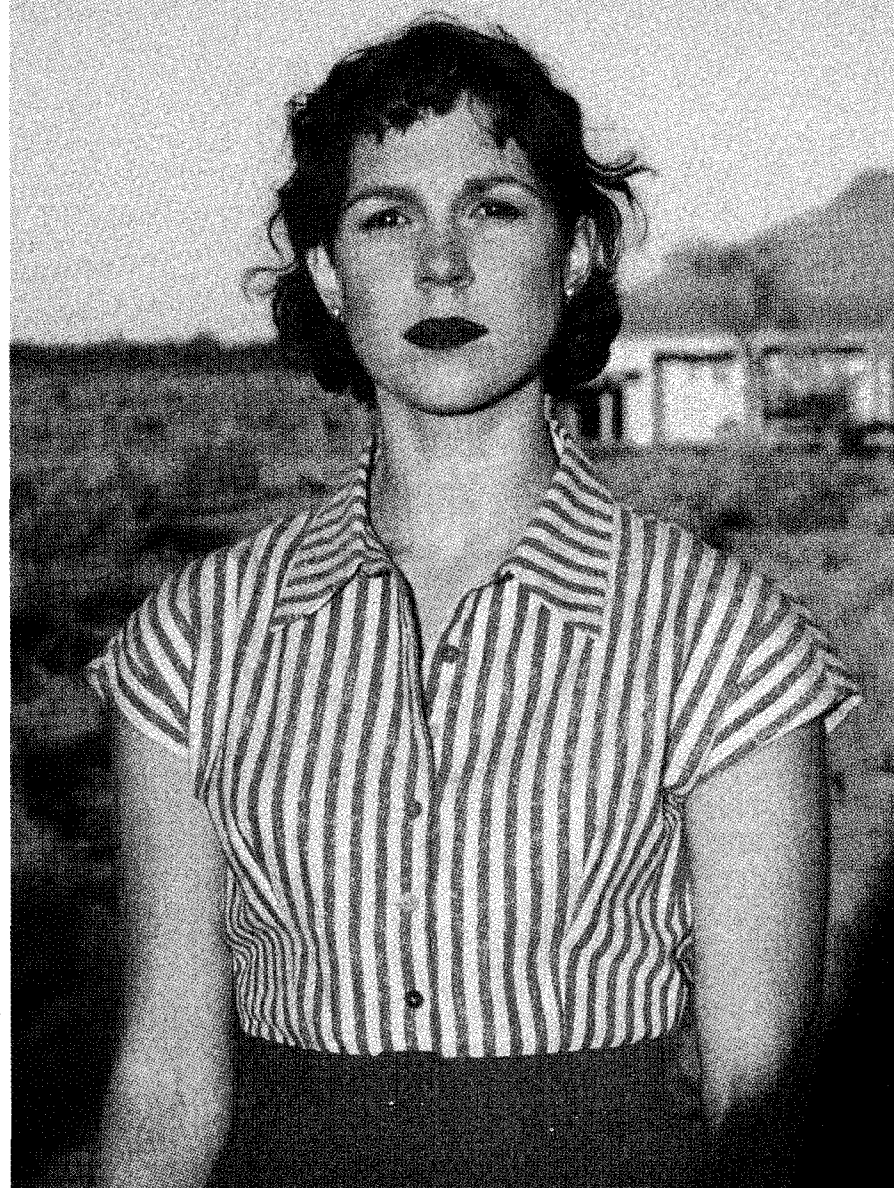
#### MAXWELL'S

1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-653-1703)—May 11: **Mike Watt**, the bass maestro behind the legendary California punk band the Minutemen and its follow-up, Firehose, is touring with a bass-organ-and-drum trio dubbed the Secondmen. He

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plans to play songs from his forthcoming record, "The Secondman's Middle Stand," a musical account of Watt's nearly fatal recent illness loosely based on "The Divine Comedy."

#### MERCURY LOUNGE

217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—May 8: The Olivia Tremor Control co-founder Bill Doss's current band, the *Sunshine Fix*, certainly takes its name seriously: fully half of the songs on its debut full-length release, "Age of the Sun," refer to the celestial body. The music is strong, if psychedelically familiar: fuzzy guitars back vague and spacey lyrics.

#### NORTHSIX

66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg (718-599-5103)—May 10: *Mike Watt* (see Maxwell's). May 11: The Anti-Pop Consortium may have been anointed the great hope of the intellectual hip-hop set thanks to the inventive production and cerebral lyrics of the group's albums, but in concert they often lack that elusive vocal necessity known as "flow."

#### VILLAGE UNDERGROUND

130 W. 3rd St. (777-7745)—May 8: The singer-songwriter *Michelle Shocked* returns with material from her new release, the two-disk set "Deep Natural."

### JAZZ AND STANDARDS

#### ALGONQUIN HOTEL

59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through May 25: Too young to be labelled the grande dame of cabaret, but still reigning over her dominion like a benevolent queen, *Karen Akers* brings with her a surfeit of sophistication, verve, and glamour. Dining.

#### BLUE NOTE

131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through May 12: Although it's been some time since the popular alto saxophonist *David Sanborn* released a recording that ventured outside

fledged jazz band, but someone's heart is obviously in the right place. And their almost-there sound must have its appeal; the band has been around for more than twenty years.

#### CARLYLE HOTEL

Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through June 29, the magisterially puckish *Bobby Short*.

#### FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY

540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—She may have found a secure place in the neo-hipster's pantheon thanks to her role as the straight-faced vocal sidekick to her then-husband Louis Prima during that wild man's fifties heyday, but *Keely Smith* (here through May 25) can still sing the stuffing out of a straight ballad as well as swing any tune into the stratosphere. She's proof that it's possible to be legendary and underrated at the same time.

#### IRIDIUM

1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—Through May 12: The *Nicholas Payton* quintet. You'd be hard pressed to find a recording under Payton's own name that fully represents his potential, but this rip-snorting trumpeter with a New Orleans-meets-Fifty-second-Street bop sensibility can be a monster in concert. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator *Les Paul*.

#### LE MADELEINE

403 W. 43rd St. (246-2993)—Sunday and Monday nights: It seems that only beautiful sounds emanate from *Gene Bertoncini's* guitar. This graceful stylist who moves effortlessly between his classical and electric instruments may be best known as part of a matchless duo with the bassist *Michael Moore*, but Bertoncini has more than enough talent to enchant on his own. Dining.

#### UP OVER JAZZ CAFE

351 Flatbush Ave., at Seventh Ave., Brooklyn (718-398-5413)—May 10-11: In what must feel like a



*The Bootleg Remedy bring their old-timey music to Fex this week.*

the smooth-jazz box, his golden tone and sure way with rhythm (not to mention such welcome and occasional left-field work as 1991's "Another Hand") offer promise. But don't place too large a bet on a radical transformation.

#### BOTTOM LINE

15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—May 8-9: To their credit, the smooth-jazz group the *Yellowjackets* have become considerably jazzier over the years. This isn't the same thing as being a full-

former life to her, *Vanessa Rubin* was once a dean of students at Prospect Heights High School. She returns to Brooklyn as a highly regarded singer of standards whose résumé also includes work with *Pharoah Sanders*, *Lionel Hampton*, and *Terence Blanchard*.

#### VILLAGE VANGUARD

178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through May 12: The *Cedar Walton* quartet, with *Vincent Herring*. Decorous bop piano meets im-

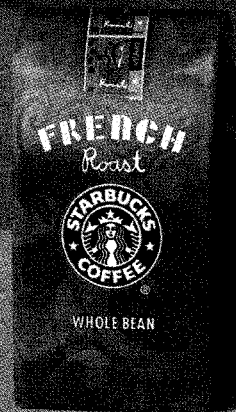
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passioned bop saxophone when the temperamentally dissimilar yet sympathetically matched keyboardist Walton and the reeds player Herring meet. Walton, a respected veteran noted for his work with Art Blakey in the mid-sixties, brings a world of experience and his superior compositions to the table. Herring has fervor and increasing maturity as a modernist improviser on his side. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

## ART MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

### METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

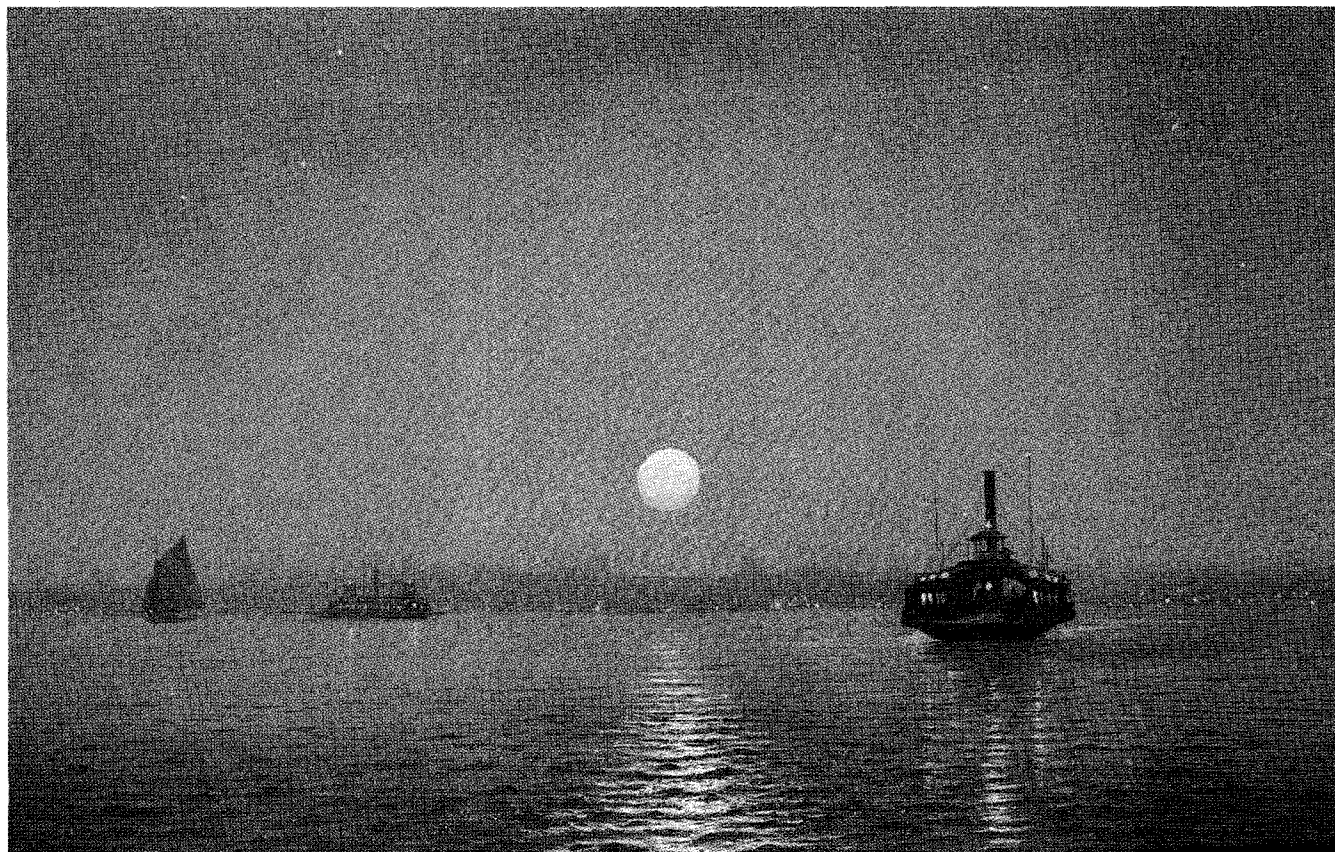
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—“**Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence.**” The aptly titled show features forty-one sumptuous ex-

made up of predominantly earnest, unambitious works by a hundred and thirteen artists and collaborative teams on four floors of the museum and in Central Park, where you can find a fifty-foot steel elm tree. The show's New Age-ish curator Lawrence R. Rinder declares that today's young American artists crave “some greater role than mere decoration or ironic critique.” His Biennial bunch achieves something decidedly lesser, on the whole, with gimmicky audio and computer works, self-indulgent installations, and a great many unsurprising video projections. (“*Vita brevis, video longa,*” one observer remarked.) Serious painting and sculpture are scarce. Momentary relief arrives in the form of memorable pieces by Vija Celmins, Chan Chao, Stephen Dean, and Lorna Simpson. Through May 26. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

concentric circles, bands of color alternating with rings of raw canvas. Here he revives his iconic bull's-eye (for the third time in four years) in a dozen works made over the past year, half of which sport a frisky palette of spring green, lavender, and daffodil yellow. An experiment with metallic paint goes awry in “**Mysteries: Spring,**” where several rings have the unfortunate appearance of high-fashion denim. But another experiment, “**Mysteries: Moonlit,**” succeeds beautifully; the deep-blue ground gleams like a starry midnight sky. Through May 24. (Ameringer Howard Yohe, 20 W. 57th St. 445-0051.)

### TOM OTTERNESS

The master of roly-poly revelry transforms the gallery into a pop-up fairy tale with a series of bronze sculptures plucked from the pages of “**Pinnocchio,**” “**Gulliver's Travels,**” and the stories of Hans Christian Andersen. The scale shifts from



*“Moonrise Over New York Harbor,” from 1871, by the luminist painter Francis A. Silva, at Berry-Hill.*

amples of magnificence woven between 1420 and 1560, including “**The Unicorn Defends Itself,**” from the Met's own Cloisters, along with three panels from the ten-part “**Acts of the Apostles,**” designed by Raphael for the Sistine Chapel, and all four sections of the “**Alba Passion**” cycle, shown together here for the first time since 1877. Through June 19. ♦ “**Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy.**” Through May 12. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

### MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—“**Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting.**” Through May 21. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

### GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—“**Brazil: Body and Soul.**” Through May 29. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

### WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The 2002 Biennial is a vast, pleasant, rather drab affair,

## GALLERIES-UP TOWN

*Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.*

### STUART DAVIS

Sixteen supercrisp paintings from 1942 to 1964 make up the latest installment of the gallery's admirable series of the late work of familiar artists. Some of the pictures hark back a little too blatantly to Picasso and Léger; others look jauntily prescient (“**Première,**” with its cockeyed lettering, sets the stage for Jean-Michel Basquiat). One unfinished painting comes with a spooky anecdote. A photograph taken the day before Davis died shows the painting on his easel. The only change made after the shot was taken—the last passage Davis painted before his death—was to write the word “**FIN.**” Through May 11. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606.)

### KENNETH NOLAND

Forty years ago, Noland ushered in the glory days of color-field abstraction with square paintings of

the tabletop “**Sad Sphere,**” a beleaguered Lilliputian with his head in his hands, to the thirty-seven-foot-long Gulliver that serves as the show's centerpiece. Here Otterness forgoes his signature chubby forms for a more attenuated approach, so the recumbent giant, his wrists and ankles tidily bound with padlocks, resembles a stick figure on steroids. Through May 18. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900.)

### MARTIN PURYEAR

Four new large sculptures in wood and wire mesh confirm Puryear as the American master of eccentric formalism—a peer of the British dazzlers Richard Deacon and Tony Cragg. The works involve degrees of containment, ranging from a massive black shape that suggests either a stoppered jug or an evil pig to a huge open framework—a kneeling animal? a tank?—that houses a big, enigmatic mesh ampersand and a small, enigmatic wooden sphere. Dramatic form battles exquisite carpentry in pieces that are overwhelming from a distance and ravishing up close. Puryear's only fault at this point is that he doesn't show often enough. Through June 21. (McKee Gallery, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 688-5951.)



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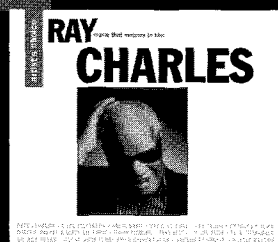
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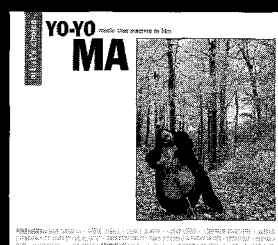


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#### ED RUSCHA

Unfamiliar Pop paintings and drawings from the mid-nineteen-sixties by the prince of semiotic cool. They depict birds and fish in metaphysical perplexity. Ruscha renders the creatures with the bright coarseness of children's-book illustrations on black, blue, or chocolate-brown grounds. One work is well known: "Angry Because It's Plaster, Not Milk," in which a bird squawks at a tipped-over glass filled with solid white stuff. In "Strange Catch for a Freshwater Fish," a distressed large-mouth bass has a pencil stuck through its lower lip; nearby, a second pencil wiggles like a worm. In other pictures, pencils form body parts of birds. Are these a draftsman's hallucinations? The show deepens our sense of Ruscha's debt to Surrealism while demonstrating the stopping power of his sang-froid. Through June 8. (C&M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020.)

#### POP NOTES



#### OLD DOGS, OLD TRICKS

"45," the leadoff track on Elvis Costello's new album, "When I Was Cruel" (Island), is the cleverest song Costello has written in years, and that's saying something. The title refers to 1945 and the birth of postwar Britain, but also to the 45-r.p.m. record: over a skidding riff, the lyrics sketch a short history of contemporary popular culture and its influence on impressionable young minds. After that, the album sags a bit. Though it reunites Costello with most of the Attractions, it doesn't take him far enough away from the deliberate eclecticism of the last decade: while there are a handful of terse guitar-driven rockers, Costello also samples Italian pop, introduces Middle Eastern horn arrangements, and employs all manner of keyboard effects. Taken in isolation, the innovations sparkle; taken together they drag; Costello comes off as an encyclopedia salesman, more interested in showing his wares than in making a strong impression.

On "Are You Passionate?" (Reprise), Neil Young takes a break from his two most common modes (dreamy folk rock, lumbering proto-grunge) to cut a soul record with members of the legendary Stax combo Booker T. and the MGs. The pairing is vaguely laughable, with Young's scarecrow voice wavering over familiar bass lines. But underneath the retro outfit it's the same old Neil: sturdy melodies wedded to less sturdy lyrics, sometimes dark, sometimes dopey. Here, he leans toward the latter, embarrassing his daughter with a proud love song ("You're My Girl") and then embarrassing his wife ("She's a Healer"). There's one moment of unfortunate bathos: "Let's Roll," which restages the anti-terrorist resistance by members of Flight 93, complete with the sound of a cell phone ringing and leaden lyrics about vanquishing "evil / When it's comin' after you."

In Paul Westerberg's solo career, he has been content to recycle the sensitive/sloppy persona that powered the Replacements. Westerberg's new double album, "Stereo/Mono" (Vagrant), offers more of the same but manages to reverse the trend of diminished returns. The mono half, recorded under the nom de chanson Grandpaboy, is a nuts-and-bolts rock record with sing-along anthems and wry observations. The stereo disk has greater sonic depth and more evident maturity, which makes it both more admirable and less enjoyable. As always, Westerberg has a talent for ramshackle bar-band melodies and drolly pessimistic song titles ("Boring Enormous," "Let the Bad Times Roll"); in the end, you could (and maybe should) play this record in the background, where his grainy strained vocals serve as reminders of his earlier greatness.

—Ben Greenman

#### FRANCIS A. SILVA

The luminist painter (1835-86) was driven by concerns that few of today's artists share. Silva's grandfather, François deLapierre, a boyhood friend of Napoléon, offended the emperor, bringing obscure dishonor to the family name, only to die in exile in Madeira. Silva's father changed his name, joined the merchant marine, became a barber in New York, and inspired in his son a lasting desire to restore brilliance to the family through a career in art. This brilliance is quite literally on display here, in lustrous views of sea-harbor sunsets in Gloucester, Tappan Zee, Coney Island, and Newport, as carefully observed schooners under sail catch the last shades of day. Through June 28. (Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. 744-2300.)

#### Short List

##### VALERIE DEMIANCHUK

George Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665.  
Through May 18.

##### ODD NERDRUM

Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 355-4545.  
Through May 11.

#### GALLERIES-CHELSEA

##### POLLY APFELBAUM AND BEATRIZ MILHAZES

It's a pity that this inspired matchup includes only a single work by each artist. Apfelbaum's latest floor installation (she thinks of them as "fallen paintings"), a vast pool of swarming, jostling beadlike shapes cut out of velvet, is as intricately gorgeous as any before. Milhazes's canvas seems calmer, a sequence of expanding rosettes that grow from a single frail, naturalistic branch. Color is key for both artists, but their affinity goes further: both compose by shifting around pre-painted elements. The results feel beguilingly light and provisional, like blossoms on the surface of a puddle. Through May 24. (D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460.)

##### DAVID BURROWS

In his entertaining New York debut, the English artist offers a suite of "Modern Domestic Disasters." Mockups of household articles (shoes, belts, wallets, brassieres, you name it) lie scattered amid sinister flames and pools of liquid—all neatly cut from foam and rubber, in construction-paper tints of pink, yellow, red, and blue. The effect is more frivolous than macabre: scatter art meets splatter flick, with just a hint of Milton Bradley. Through May 11. (Taylor, 535 W. 22nd St. 646-230-0992.)

##### CARROLL DUNHAM

In wizardly black-and-white acrylic paintings on linen that look at first like vast ink drawings on acetate, Dunham reenergizes his frequent glyph of a rageful, top-hatted, eyeless, penis-sized dude embedded in shattered forms of water, trees, and houses. How can such gross imagery pay off in joys of virtuosic elegance? Perhaps it's by communicating a narcissist's chief drives—need and resentment, the hunger for love, and the will to kill—so quickly and thoroughly that a first glance uses them up, leaving no mystery except the fact of creative alacrity. Dunham races through meaning so that execution can rule. This show's wealth of tonal and textural beauties (with subliminal effects created by minuscule glass beads and sand) more than beguiles. Through June 1. (Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100.)

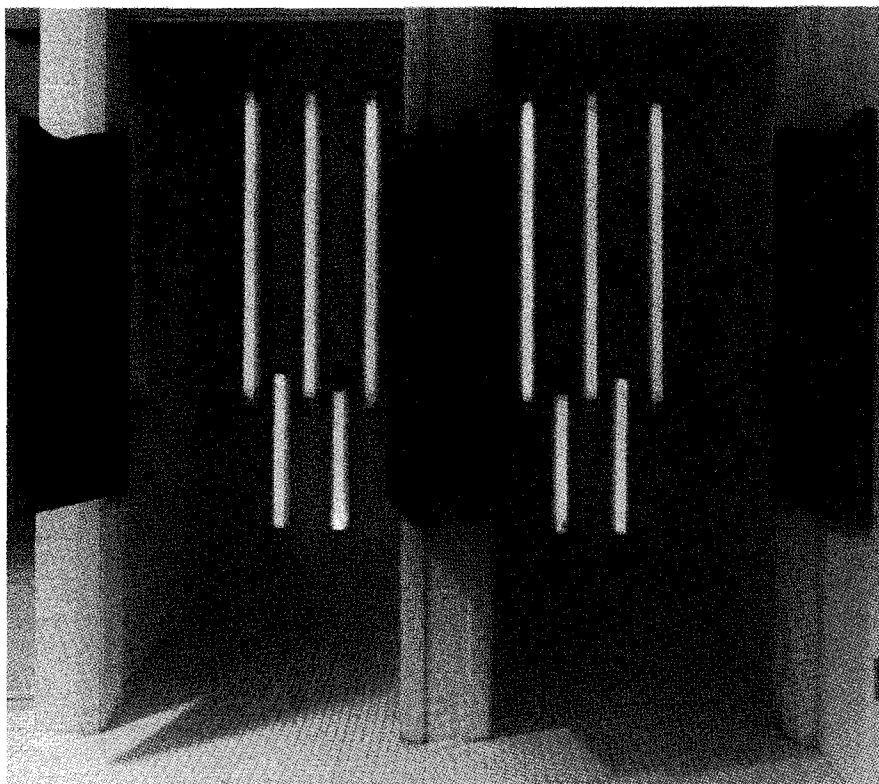
##### STEFAN KÜRTE

Kürten channels Klimt, not just in his use of metallic gold backgrounds and swirling floral patterns, but in the aura of melancholy that saturates his landscapes and buildings. The ornamental density of the images can be cloying, but at his best Kürten finds the exotic in the everyday. A solarium becomes a domestic jungle, and a glass-topped table on an outdoor patio transforms into a reflecting pool so lovely you want to toss in a coin and make a wish. Through May 25. (Alexander & Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave., at 18th St. 367-7474.)

##### GILES LYON

Trippy, biomorphic, funk-Pop-Surrealist—it's hard to think of a label that *doesn't* apply to Lyon's





*Lucinda Devlin's photographs of empty, intimate rooms, at Paul Rodgers.*

acid-bright abstractions. With their endless profusion of taffyish forms, Lyon's paintings project a kaleidoscopic mania that seems, at least, very contemporary. For some viewers, the result is likely to be a severe case of eye fatigue. For others, images like "Poppa's Last Party," a giant fluorescent asterisk that incorporates his late grandfather's tie collection, might be this generation's answer to Jay de Feo's "The Rose." Through May 25. (Feigen Contemporary, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500.)

#### Short List

##### SUSAN ROTHENBERG

Sperone Westwater, 415 W. 13th St. 431-4685.  
Through June 1.

##### DAVID SANDLIN

Gracie Mansion, 504 W. 22nd St. 645-7656.  
Through May 18.

##### SUE WILLIAMS

303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121.  
Through May 18.

#### GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

##### "DEMONCLOWNMONKEY"

Artist Matthew Ritchie turns impresario, organizing an ambitious installation of works by eight young artists. He converted the gallery into a maze, with each artist occupying one of a series of interconnected passageways. Highlights include Scott Grodesky's reverse-perspective painting of an Athenian street scene and Karen Leo's hilarious short films, starring a man-size sock puppet who bears a disturbing resemblance to Bruce Willis. But the most impressive work here is by a French Canadian newcomer, David Altmejd. A Plexiglas platform with cutaway cubbies, the labyrinth-within-a-labyrinth houses crystal-studded werewolves in lieu of a Minotaur. Through May 11. (Artist's Space, 38 Greene St. 226-3970.)

#### Short List

##### NANCY BALLIETT

Atlantic, 40 Wooster St. 219-3183.  
Through May 11.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

##### SHELBY LEE ADAMS

The eastern-Kentucky native has been explaining his home turf for years, but many of his current pictures achieve a formal, nearly abstract beauty that was missing in his past documentary-like work. Adams grew up travelling with his father, a country doctor, from home to home—or shack to shack—and he does much the same thing now with a camera in place of a stethoscope. His portraits tend toward Arbus-style engagement with locals, capturing, say, a man in a barbed-wire pen, surrounded by cows and cradling his baby in his arms. But his most affecting images are solitary portraits of young girls—in Mary Janes and overalls—posed defiantly in front of tractor tires or tumbling cinder-block walls. Through June 1. (Milo, 552 W. 24th St. 414-0370.)

##### LUCINDA DEVLIN

Devlin, who seems obsessed with secret, sturdy, enclosed places (her most recent work featured electric-chair chambers), now brings her camera into the fantasy rooms of sex hotels. The spaces, called the "Pulsations Room" or the "Northern Lights Room," and so on, are completely unsexy, but a lot of the enclosures—spotlit, performance-ready beds, heart-shaped hot tubs—seem pointedly, almost clinically womblike. Her detached view brings just the right amount of humor—which is to say none. She lets the forlorn absurdity of a FantaSuite Hotel speak for itself. Through May 11. (Paul Rodgers/9W, 529 W. 20th St. 414-9810.)

##### ANDREA FRANK

Seen all at once, Frank's lighthearted evocations of idyllic childhood can leave a queasy feeling in the stomach. The German photographer manipulates images primarily from the thirties—boys and girls napping on mats, a dining room on the verge of a food fight, altar boys in church, young men and women exercising in startlingly precise formation—to bring to mind the effects on children of a particularly German brand of totalitarianism. Through May 25. (Marvelli, 526 W. 26th St. 627-3363.)

##### LISA KERESZI

Although Kereszi photographs the banal—a few pieces of popcorn on a blue theatre floor, a cotton-

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AND: A calendar of  
New Yorker events  
across the country



candy-pink curtain next to an equally tacky painting—she avoids ironic angles and reveals a romantic sensitivity for the everyday. One image offers a deadpan look at the spot where two single mattresses meet to form a fake-out double bed; another shows a vacant rooftop parking lot. At first, it looks like another detached urban landscape. Then you notice a distant fireworks display bursting into the picture like Tinkerbell. Through May 27. (Pierogi, 177 N. 9th St., Williamsburg. 718-599-2144.)

#### PATRICK McMULLAN

McMullan, whose forthcoming book is called "SO 80's," voraciously shoots the kind of glamorous,

tographs of the Hindenberg's Last Landing." Both shows through June 16. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

#### Short List

##### MARIAN ROTH

Bateman, 560 Broadway. 925-7951. Through May 18.

##### "FLORA"

Cook, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St. 737-3550. Through May 23.



Lang Lang plays Prokofiev with the New York Philharmonic, beginning May 9.

high-access pictures that harken back to the greed-is-good years. Assembled here are his well-known fashion-show and night-club shots coupled with more poetic images of New York: a subway entrance, lights on trees as seen from a passing taxi, and a nighttime cityscape. Even when spliced between the fashion shows and parties, his reflective moments never seem tired or strung out—just tender idylls while the rest of the city sleeps. Through May 25. (Corning, 667 Madison Ave., at 61st St. 752-1441.)

**INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY** 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. 857-0000—"Dream Street: W. Eugene Smith's Pittsburgh Photographs." ♦ "Rise of the Picture Press: Photographic Reportage in Illustrated Magazines, 1918-1939" is plastered with magazine photographs, including work from Andres Kertesz, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Margaret Bourke-White. The exhibition chronicles a heady time—the dawn of photojournalism—when magazines introduced innovations like montage (grafting Garbo's face onto the Sphinx), invented a "Separated at Birth"-like feature (placing a llama's face beside a portrait of Mr. Neville Chamberlain), and turned for the first time to bystanders to get records of major events, as in "Amateur Pho-

## AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

##### SOTHEBY'S

May 8 at 7: Part I of "Impressionist and Modern Art" offers a number of major paintings and sculptures by such artists as Picasso, Matisse, Gauguin, Degas ("Au Musée du Louvre," a painting of Mary Cassatt, estimated to bring up to eighteen million dollars), and Giacometti. ♦ May 9 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: Part II of the sale, two sessions of works by many of the same artists. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

##### CHRISTIE'S

May 8 at 10 A.M.: The final session of a two-day sale of Impressionist and modern art. ♦ May 8 at 2: Impressionist and modern works on paper. ♦ May 14 at 7: The first session of "Post-War and Contemporary Art," a two-day sale. Among the selections are five paintings from the collection of Lars Ulrich, Metallica's power drummer, whose taste, not surprisingly, runs to the raw emotive energy of works by such artists as Dubuffet, Appel, and Basquiat. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)

#### PHILLIPS

May 13 at 7 and May 14 at 10 A.M.: "Post-War and Contemporary Art," including works by Bacon and Warhol. (3 W. 57th St. 940-1200.)

#### ANTIQUORUM

May 8 at 10:30 A.M. and 2: Pocket watches, wrist-watches, and clocks. (Grand Havana Room, 666 Fifth Ave. 750-1103.)

#### INTERNATIONAL FINE ART FAIR

Paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the Renaissance era to the modern age. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 642-8572. May 10-15.)

## CLASSICAL MUSIC OPERA

#### METROPOLITAN OPERA

The house has brought in Luciano Pavarotti to close its season, and his performances in "Tosca" will be eagerly watched. The tenor, now in his mid-sixties, is no longer an agile presence onstage—and his retirement from opera cannot be far away. But no man sings this music with such beauty, and he has no apparent successors. Maria Guleghina and James Morris, no slouches themselves, are his comrades in the leading roles; James Levine conducts. (May 8 and May 11 at 8; the second performance is the closing-night gala.) ♦ "Rigoletto," with Maureen O'Flynn, Frank Lopardo, and Juan Pons (in the title role); Marco Guidarini. (May 9 at 7:30.) ♦ Tim Albery's magical production of Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with Alexandra Deshorties, Susan Chilcott, Maria Zifchak, Bejun Mehta, Paul Groves, Nathan Gunn, and Peter Rose; David Atherton. (May 10 at 8.) ♦ John Harbison has succeeded in making Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" into what he calls a "music-driven" opera. He has an almost Straussian skill and sympathy in writing for female voices (and the roles of Daisy Buchanan, Jordan Baker, and Myrtle Wilson are sung to perfection by Dawn Upshaw, Margaret Lattimore, and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson), his ear has caught the dime-store sentiments of Jazz Age pop songs, and his lustrous, intricate orchestral writing is so absorbing that it can distract from the action onstage. Which is just the problem, since Harbison, notwithstanding a few cuts to his original score, has still given us a musical interpretation of the novel rather than a real opera filled with real people. Jerry Hadley, coping admirably with an awkwardly written part, is Gatsby. Also with Mark Baker (as Tom Buchanan) and Dwayne Croft (as Nick Carraway); Levine. (May 11 at 1.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

#### NEW YORK CITY OPERA:

##### "SHOWCASING AMERICAN COMPOSERS"

The company presents a series of open rehearsals of excerpts from new operas by Dan Welcher, Kirke Mechem, David Del Tredici (the Lewis Carroll-inspired "Dum Dee Tweedle," narrated by Regina Resnik), and D. C. Meckler. The singers include Julianne Borg and Joseph Kaiser; George Manahan conducts. (Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, West End Ave. at 86th St. May 8-9 at 4. No tickets required.)

#### AMATO OPERA

Presenting "Carmen," directed and conducted by Anthony Amato. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. May 11 at 7:30 and May 12 at 2:30. Through June 2.)

## ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

#### NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

Lang Lang, a nineteen-year-old Chinese musician, is the piano world's latest phenom, acclaimed wherever he goes; he makes his Philharmonic debut with Prokofiev's Concerto No. 3 on a program that concludes with Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 ("Pathétique"). Christoph Eschenbach conducts. (May 9 and May 11 at 8, May 10 at 11 A.M., and May 14 at 7:30.) (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500.)

#### ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Performing music by Beethoven (the Symphony No. 4), Stravinsky, and Elgar (the "Introduction and Allegro"). (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 8 at 8.)

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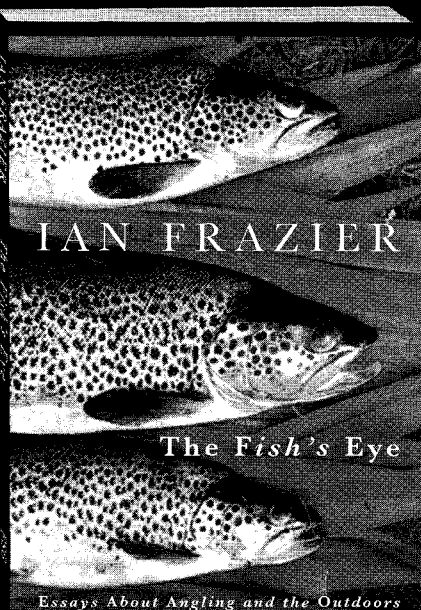
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# FISH TALES



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—Tyler D. Johnson,  
*The New York Times Book Review*

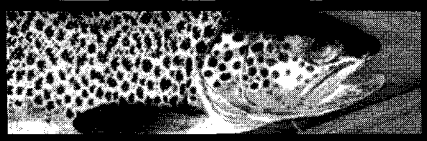
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### PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

Since Emanuel Ax is the most poetic and refined of current American pianists, his participation in the world premiere of the piano concerto "Resurrection," by Penderecki—a composer of considerable power, but never a master of subtlety—is something of a surprise. But the combined talents of Ax and Wolfgang Sawallisch, the orchestra's fantastically exact conductor, will surely give the piece an impressive launch. Brahms's Symphony No. 3 in F Major, an enigmatic work that punishes complacent performers, concludes the program. (Carnegie Hall, 247-4800. May 9 at 8.)

### AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Leon Botstein, the A.S.O.'s music director and philosopher king, turns his attention to Scandinavian composers: Sibelius (the Seventh Symphony), Vagn Holmboe, and Wilhelm Stenhammar (the Piano Concerto No. 2, with Mari Kodama). (Avery Fisher Hall, 721-6500. May 10 at 8.)

### CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA OF THE CHURCH OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

The Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano Susanne Mentzer, adding a touch of glamour to the proceedings, takes the title role in a concert performance of "Marie-Magdeleine," Massenet's three-act *drame sacré*. Kent Tritle conducts. (980 Park Ave., at 84th St. 288-2520. May 14 at 8.)

## RECITALS

### GIDON KREMER

May 8 at 7: Since the violinist's performances, at their best, combine bravura technique, intellectual daring, and a dark-hued spirituality, St. Paul's Chapel, on the Columbia campus, should prove an ideal setting for Bach's Solo Sonatas and Partitas. (Broadway at 116th St. For information about tickets, call 247-7800.) ♦ May 11 at 8: Kremer joins two longtime colleagues, the pianist Martha Argerich and the cellist Mischa Maisky, for an evening of Haydn, Schumann, and Shostakovich (the Piano Trio No. 2). (Carnegie Hall, 247-7800.)

### BARGEMUSIC

May 9 and May 11 at 7:30: The violinist Mihaela Martin, the violist Paul Neubauer, and the cellist Frans Helmerson perform music by Martinů, Schnittke, and Beethoven (the String Trio in G Major). ♦ May 10 at 7:30 and May 12 at 4: Anne-Marie and Kerry McDermott, playing, respectively, piano and violin, join the ensemble in works by Penderecki, Smetana, and Dohnányi (the Piano Quintet in C Minor, Op. 1). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

### THE SILK ROAD PROJECT

Arriving after a year of build-up and a European tour, Yo-Yo Ma and his Silk Road Ensemble—playing a plethora of Western and non-Western instruments—complete their concert series at Carnegie Hall with a program of contemporary music from Mongolia, Korea, and China (Zhao Jiping's "Moon Over Guan Mountains," featuring the pi-pa virtuoso Wu Man). Ravel's Piano Trio in A Minor—a masterwork of French Impressionism, structured on Malayan poetic forms—closes the concert. (247-7800. May 10 at 8.)

### PIANOS AND STRINGS

A final pair of concerts from two eminent string quartets, each of which has spent its season collaborating with distinctive pianists. May 11 at 8: The Guarneri Quartet teams up with Philippe Bianconi for a program of Beethoven, Ravel, and Dvořák (the Piano Quintet in A Major). (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.) ♦ May 11 at 8: Max Levinson joins the Tokyo Quartet for a concert of music by Brahms (including the Piano Quintet in F Minor) and the contemporary Japanese composer Hikaru Hayashi (a premiere). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5500.)

### "MUSIC UNDER CONSTRUCTION" SERIES:

#### BRADLEY BROOKSHIRE

The harpsichordist, renowned for his Bach interpretations, takes a walk on the wild side (with the violinist Theresa Salomon), shaking up a program of Couperin and Rameau with contemporary music by the composers William Albright, Thomas

Robin Harris, and Christopher Woltmann. (Construction Company, 10 E. 18th St. 924-7882. May 11 at 8.)

### MAURIZIO POLLINI

The pianist brings his poetic power and intellectual command to an all-Chopin program (including the "Préludes" and the Scherzo No. 3). (Carnegie Hall, 247-7800. May 12 at 2.)

### STEPHANIE BLYTHE

Singing works by four composers from the turn of the nineteenth century, whose music combined delicacy with grandeur: Griffes, Chausson, Loeffler (the Four Songs with Viola, featuring Paul Neubauer), and Elgar (the "Sea Pictures," a touching monument of Victoriana). The pianist is Warren Jones. (Alice Tully Hall, 721-6500. May 12 at 2.)

### NEW MILLENNIUM ENSEMBLE

The Naumburg Award-winning group presents a concert of premières by Scott Johnson, Randall Woolf, C. Bryan Rulon ("The Hyena and the Stork," based on a story by Paul Bowles), and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 12 at 3.)

### ELASTIC BAND

A new chamber ensemble that lives up to its name, presenting a program that stretches from the Renaissance (Gesualdo and Frescobaldi) to the modern and contemporary eras (works by Wuorinen, Weill, and Alma and Gustav Mahler). The performers include the mezzo-soprano Mary Nessinger and the violinist Daniel Phillips; the concert closes with an "Elastic Band Theme Song" by the ubiquitous Bruce Adolph, the unofficial composer-in-residence of the Upper West Side. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. May 14 at 2.)

### JUPITER SYMPHONY CHAMBER PLAYERS

A program of Beethoven (the Septet in E-Flat Major) and Bach, performed by the violinist Dmitri Berlinsky, the clarinetist Vadim Lando, and others. (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. 799-1259. May 14 at 2 and 8.)

### ALEXANDER FITERSTEIN

The clarinetist, a prize-winner in the 2001 Young Concert Artists Auditions, makes his New York recital debut with a concert of music by Debussy, Brahms (the Sonata No. 2 in E-Flat Major), Lutoslawski, and the young American composer Mason Bates (the premiere of "Mercury Soul"). The pianist is Steven Beck. (92nd St. Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. May 14 at 8. For information about tickets, call 307-6656.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

### READINGS

May 8 at 6:30: Stanley Kunitz reads from and discusses the works of the twentieth-century Russian poet Anna Akhmatova. (Graduate Center, City University of New York, Fifth Ave. at 34th St. For more information, call 431-7920.) ♦ May 13 at 7:30: The poets David Lehman and Star Black read from their work. (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ May 13 at 7:30: Peter Mayle, taking a break from his house in the South of France, offers selections from his gastronomic travelogue "French Lessons: Adventures with Knife, Fork, and Corkscrew." (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary.)

### TALKS

May 9 at 6: Jules Feiffer discusses his journey from cartoonist to children's book author. (Donnell Library, 20 W. 53rd St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ May 10 at 6: The *National Geographic* photographer Steve McCurry talks about his new book, "Sanctuary: The Temples of Angkor." (International Center of Photography Museum Store, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. 857-9725.) ♦ May 13 at 8:15: The *New Yorker* writer Mary Anne Weaver discusses militant movements in Islam. (Lecture Hall B, N.Y.U. Medical Center, 530 First Ave., between 30th and 33rd Sts. No tickets necessary.)

### TOUR

May 11 from 1 to 5: The Brooklyn Heights Association offers a self-guided stroll through the nineteenth-century homes in the neighborhood. For more information, call 718-858-9193.



## BOOK CURRENTS

*Growth Industry*



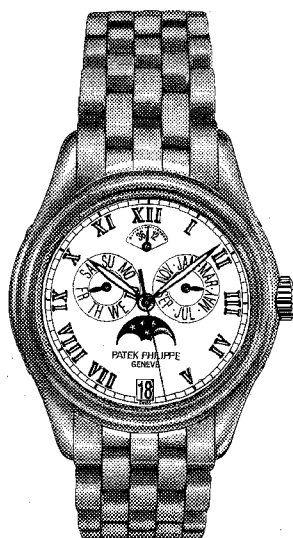
With the coming of spring, the Modern Library recently began a new series of classic books on gardening, literary excursions on the art and ethos of gardens, which the general editor of the series, Michael Pollan, likens to a conversation that "takes place over the back fence that joins any two gardens in the world." Perhaps the most delightful of the first crop is **THE GARDENER'S YEAR**, from 1929, written by the great Czech author and playwright Karel Čapek and illustrated by his brother Josef. While Čapek pays lip service to the well-established month-by-month almanac of garden tasks, his true subject is the stubborn monomaniacal nature of gardeners themselves. "Let no one think that real gardening is a bucolic and meditative occupation," he writes. "It is an insatiable passion, like everything else to which a man gives his heart." Real gardeners, it turns out, are oblivious to the pretty things that ordinary people admire; they concentrate instead on controlling the earth. A gardener in Eden would probably "forget to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; he would rather look round to see how he could manage to take away from the Lord some barrowloads of the paradisaic soil."

Evidence that the over-the-fence conversation of literary gardeners continues as volubly as ever can be found in James Fenton's **A GARDEN FROM A HUNDRED PACKETS OF SEED** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). Starting from the premise that, in the received wisdom of garden planning, "design has become a terrible, stupid, and expensive tyrant," Fenton encourages his readers to buy seeds, plant them, and see what happens. Contemptuous of the "color snobbery" of garden writers, he evinces a fondness for bright orange. Ideally, he feels, gardens need make no statement more consequential than "This is what I felt like having this year."

—Leo Carey

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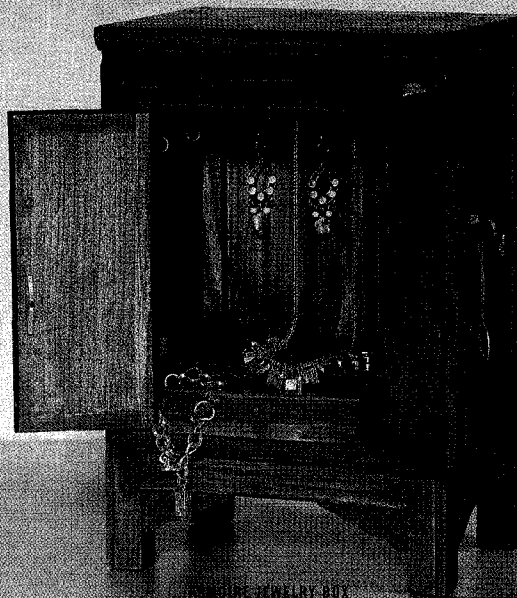
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## MOVIES OPENING

### JANICE BEARD

A British romantic comedy about a dreamy, naïve Scottish woman (Eileen Walsh) who takes a job in London to help find a cure for her mother's agoraphobia. Opening May 10.

### THE LADY AND THE DUKE

Reviewed this week in *The Current Cinema*. Opening May 10.

### LAGAAN

Set in 1893, this four-hour Bollywood musical centers on a cricket match between Indian villagers and their British rulers. With Aamir Khan and Paul Blackthorne. In Hindi and English. Opening May 8. (Film Forum.)

### THE NEW GUY

A teen comedy about a high-school nerd (D. J. Qualls) who gets lessons in how to be cool from a prison inmate (Eddie Griffin). Opening May 10.

### PROFIT AND NOTHING BUT!

Raoul Peck ("Lumumba") directed this documentary about the effects of globalization on his native Haiti. It's paired with "Diamonds and Rust," a film about life on an African diamond-mining ship, directed by Adi Barash and Ruth Shatz. Opening May 8. (Pioneer.)

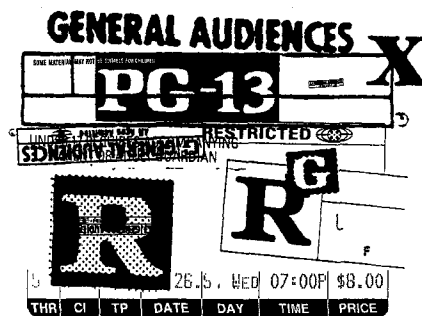
### UNFAITHFUL

In a thriller directed by Adrian Lyne ("Fatal Attraction"), Diane Lane plays a wealthy suburban woman who has an affair with a stranger (Olivier Martinez) she meets on a SoHo street. Richard Gere plays Lane's husband. Opening May 8.

## FILM NOTES

### BARAN

Latif (Hossein Abedini), a wily Iranian teen-ager, falls in love with an Afghan refugee girl, Baran (Zahra Bahrami), who works at the same con-



struction site as he does in Tehran. He hardly approaches her, though; he treats Baran as a kind of sacred mystery he must protect. This quietly rhapsodic movie is made in a spirit of the deepest respect. It doesn't knock you out, but it's often touching. Written and directed by the Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi. In Farsi.—David Denby (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

### CHANGING LANES

A young corporate lawyer (Ben Affleck) and a troubled father who works as an insurance salesman (Samuel L. Jackson) get into a minor collision on the F.D.R. Drive, and instead of just letting the damn thing go, they spend the rest of the day tormenting each other. The plot, with its matched, escalating acts of revenge, may be a contrivance, but the movie plays earnestly and well. The real subject of "Changing Lanes" is not revenge, but the malevolence inherent in a competitive society that occasionally breaks through the surface, leaving anyone who takes part feeling ridiculous and bewildered. The camera is too active, and the editing strategies too unsettled, but much of the writing (by Chap Taylor and Michael Tolkin) is either affecting or gratifyingly nasty. The final surprise: Ben Affleck grows up and gives the first good performance of his life. With Sydney Pollack, Kim Staunton, and Amanda Peet.

Directed by Roger Michell.—D.D. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/6/02.) (42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

### DIVERTIMENTO

Edouard Frenhofer (Michel Piccoli) is a celebrated artist living with his wife, Liz (Jane Birkin), in a gorgeous house in the South of France. He is king of the castle, at least until his reign is disturbed by the arrival of a young admirer, who brings with him a ravishing, taciturn girlfriend called Marianne (Emmanuelle Béart). Asked to pose for the Master, she refuses angrily yet still turns up the next morning and obligingly removes her clothes—just the kind of odd, unreasoning change of heart that tells us we are watching a Jacques Rivette film. Most of it is taken up by artist and model, and by the tricky exchanges of power that unfold with every sitting. Originally released in a four-hour version ("La Belle Noiseuse," 1991), the movie has now been cut down to half the length, and a good thing, too. It lacks the lucid wit of Rivette's best work, yet there is still much to enjoy: the hypnotic atmosphere of the studio, its calm cracked by frustration, and Piccoli's delicious portrait of an artist at the height of his powers, terrified of falling. In French.—Anthony Lane (Florence Gould Hall; May 14.)

### DOGTOWN AND Z-BOYS

An exuberant documentary account of the rebirth of skateboarding in the early seventies. It seems that a fortuitous combination of newly invented polyurethane wheels and a drought in Southern California—all those drained swimming pools with their curved bottoms and vertical sides—led a bunch of surfer rats in Santa Monica to adapt their crouching, wave-touching moves to the skateboard. As a culture, skateboarding took off from there, and almost thirty years later, the little group of punky pioneers is still proud of what they did. Skate legend Stacy Peralta directed, and the documentary has lots of home movies, stills, and current interviews with the grownup Z-boys, including such former teen masters as Jay Adams and Tony Alva. The movie is too



Opening May 8, "Lagaan," a Bollywood epic that features song-and-dance numbers and a winner-take-all cricket match.



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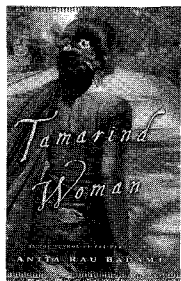
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# NEW FROM ALGONQUIN

## TAMARIND WOMAN

a novel by Anita Rau Badami



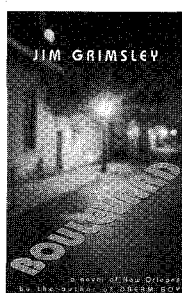
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## BOULEVARD

a novel by  
Jim Grimsley



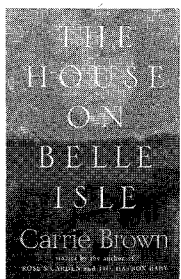
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long for what it has to say, but it has a likably rough surface and an appreciation of odd talents and quirks. Sean Penn is the narrator.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center, Empire 25, and 19th Street East 6.)

### ENIGMA

The title refers to the infamous encryption machine employed by the Germans in the Second World War, although viewers may be excused for noting a deeper mystery: how could anyone make such a prosaic film out of such promising material? We get a young Cambridge mathematician (Dougray Scott), who is called to Bletchley Park—the secret center of British brainwork in the fight against Enigma—to crack a new code named Shark. There, hindered by one clerk (Saffron Burrows) and helped by another (Kate Winslet), he is dragged into a saga of spying, treachery, and terrible wartime food. The task of deciphering, though laid out with a care verging on the simplistic, manages nevertheless to remain unintelligible, as does the means by which the action suddenly switches to Scotland. With Jeremy Northam as a smooth spook and, for one delirious moment, Mick Jagger.—*A.L.* (4/22 & 29/02) (Angelika Film Center, Cinema 1, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, and 19th Street East 6.)

### HOME MOVIE

The documentarian Chris Smith is a connoisseur of the gnarly fringe of humanity—unreconstructed eccentrics who live by their own internal rules and systems. "Home Movie" is not a sustained leer like Smith's previous work, "American Movie," but a light, hour-long look at five people who live in unusual houses. We don't spend enough time with the subjects to really get to know them (a Florida houseboat dweller and an old lady who has retreated to a jungle treehouse are the most vivid), but the queasy voyeurism that seems to be Smith's forte settles in immediately. His movie is paired with "Heavy Metal Parking Lot," a fifteen-minute video shot in 1986 by two amateur cameramen. Their simple, glorious achievement was to record fans of Judas Priest getting loaded before a concert. These metalheads live for loud guitars, lots of beers, and their Camaros, and there's no reason not to love them for it.—*Michael Agger* (Union Square.)

### KISSING JESSICA STEIN

The title character is a nice Jewish girl from Scarsdale who is not gay, but wants to know how to be. After a series of dates with feckless men, she answers a personal ad placed by a woman seeking a woman. So far, so straight. The twist is that the woman who wrote the ad is, like Jessica, debuting as a lesbian, and together the two begin a jittery emotional experiment. Heather Juergensen and Jennifer Westfeldt play the leads, and they also wrote the script, which is very chatty and fast. Their courtship scenes convince where it matters most: showing how the skittish and prim Stein might loosen up and respond to another woman, a self-imposed dare that becomes a reality.—*M.A.* (Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Sunshine Cinema.)

### LIFE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT

Not much like it, actually. Angelina Jolie, her hair in a dreadful blond bouffant, is the smart but shallow Lanie Kerigan, a Seattle local-news TV reporter who wants to go network. Her life begins to fall apart when a street bum who makes prophecies (Tony Shalhoub) says she will die in a week. She is forced to encounter what's authentic in this world, which turns out to be Edward Burns, unshaven, as a cameraman with a devil-may-care attitude. Will she be saved from the unspeakable crime of careerism and learn to enjoy life? Written by John Scott Shepherd and directed by Stephen Herek.—*D.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Village East Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

### THE MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK

It's wartime, and Betty Hutton is the overenthusiastic girl who dates a soldier and produces sextuplets. This is one of Preston Sturges's surreal-slapstick-satire-connoisseur-fit comedies, and part of our great crude heritage. This 1944 picture was held up for a year because of censorship problems, and you'll know why.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; May 11-13.)

### MONSOON WEDDING

Mira Nair's new picture has been hailed as a feel-good spree, but it's better than that—a barely stable

compound of the wounding, the confusing, and the appealing. The action takes place in Delhi, where a pair of middle-class parents (Lillete Dubey and Naseeruddin Shah) work themselves into a froth over the nuptials of their daughter (Vasundhara Das). Her marriage is, of course, arranged; for all the racket and buzz of the film's modernity, it finds time to make the suggestion—bewildering, perhaps, to audiences here—that from this archaic arrangement can spring an enduring love. The groom is flying in from Houston, Texas; another relative travels from Australia, and you brace yourself for the cultural collisions. The result is a comedy, but only just. India's stressful poise between orthodoxy and innovation (listen for the clash of peacock and cell phone) leads to a devastating family fracture that is only half-healed by the celebrations at the end. In English and Hindi.—*A.L.* (2/18 & 25/02) (Paris, Sunshine Cinema, and 34th Street Theatre.)

### MURDER BY NUMBERS

Cheesy, but absorbing. Two would-be high-school supermen—the morosely bookish Justin (Michael Pitt), who carries a volume of Rimbaud around with him, and his friend Richard (Ryan Gosling), a cocky rich kid with superior powers of seduction and intimidation—randomly select a woman in their California town and murder her. Their nemesis: a neurotically driven homicide detective (Sandra Bullock) who lives with an unhappy past. Bullock enters the crime scene holding a doughnut box and speaks quietly, her attention fixed on the dead body and the terrain. Is she believable as a crime specialist? Well, she's believable as a comedy star attempting to give a serious performance as a crime specialist. The scenes of detection are woven together with grisly episodes from the crime, seen in flashbacks. The director, Barbet Schroeder, and the screenwriter, Tony Gayton, bring out the perverse psychological connection between Bullock and the contemptible but attractive kid played by Gosling.—*D.D.* (5/6/02) (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, Sutton 1 and 2, and Union Square.)

### NINE QUEENS

The great Argentinean actor Ricardo Darín plays an experienced grifter who takes a young hopeful (Gastón Pauls) into his confidence game. The seductive and manipulative camerawork and the sly-as-a-fox performance by Darín combine to make a slippery caper movie. There are elements of Mamet and Hitchcock throughout, but the director, Fabián Bielinsky, uses these influences amusingly and crafts an unpredictable entertainment. In Spanish.—*Bruce Diones* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

### PANIC ROOM

The title of the new David Fincher film refers to a secure stronghold that is built into the walls of a New York house. Think of it as a safe, in which you lock your loved ones as well as your money. It is in one such room that a divorced mother (Jodie Foster) and her daughter (Kristen Stewart) take refuge when three burglars (Forest Whitaker, Dwight Yoakam, and Jared Leto) break in at night. From here on it's a game of cat and mouse, with the cat swinging a sledgehammer and the mice trying to reach their cell phone. The result is not so much scary as endlessly worrying; the movie was designed, propitiously, to suck in all the insecurities that you can imagine, and a few that you can't. What lends the ordeal its bite is the payoff between Whitaker, with his sluggish menace, and the tight-lipped, fretting Foster.—*A.L.* (4/8/02) (Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

### THE PIANO TEACHER

Michael Haneke's calmly lucid masterpiece is about a seemingly unmanageable subject: a sadomasochistic piano teacher, Professor Erika Kohut (Isabelle Huppert), who maintains a sternly proper façade at the Vienna Conservatory while tormenting and playing dirty tricks on her talented students. Erika lives in an apartment with her hysterically possessive mother (Annie Girardot)—the two take turns slapping each other—and she tries to control the insolently charming and handsome young piano student (Benoît Magimel) who wants to be her lover. She may be a certifiable nut straight out of clinical literature, but



she's also a remarkable dramatic creation—an appalling but plausible human being brought to life by one of the world's bravest actresses. Huppert, whose masklike face seethes with rage, gives a classic account of repression and sexual hypocrisy. This is a genuinely shocking movie (one scene of self-mutilation is hard to take), but it's supremely intelligent, too, and there isn't a trace of sensationalism. Music by Bach, Schubert, and Brahms is central to the narrative. In French.—*D.D.* (4/1/02) (Cinema Village and Sutton 1 and 2.)

#### THE SALTON SEA

A noirish, down-and-out Los Angeles apartment; tattooed meth-heads freaking at endless parties; a lonely trumpet player sitting in a building on fire—the young director D. J. Caruso is a romantic rhapsodist of squalor and disaster. His material is morose, self-pitying, and pretentious, but the picture is absorbing nonetheless and generally well acted. Val Kilmer gives a grimly witty performance as the seemingly defeated hero, a man who has suffered loss and is seeking revenge. Vincent D'Onofrio goes over the top as a sadistic drug dealer who has snorted away his nose (he's got a plastic one), and virtually every hip actor remaining in Hollywood can be found burrowing in one dark corner or another. Screenplay by Tony Gayton. See it very late at night.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

#### SPIDER-MAN

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Astor Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, Chelsea West, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

#### TOPPER

Much fun; a sophisticated fantasy, with Cary Grant and Constance Bennett as a high-stepping married couple, George and Marion Kirby. Killed in an automobile accident, they return as elegant, ectoplasmic pranksters and drive banker Cosmo Topper (Roland Young) to happy distraction. Norman Z. McLeod directed this 1937 adaptation of a Thorne Smith novel; the picture was such a hit that it led to a series of movies and then to a TV series, but don't judge this one by what followed. This is the one to see, and for those who don't know why Constance Bennett was a big movie star, her provocative, teasing Marion Kirby should provide the answer.—*P.K.* (Film Forum; May 8.)

#### Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN

The latest movie from the Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón, who came to Hollywood to make "A Little Princess" and "Great Expectations" and who has now returned in triumph to his homeland. The story is a stripped-down road movie: two teen-age friends, one rich (Diego Luna) and one poor (Gael García Bernal), borrow a car and set off to find the perfect beach, in the company of a Spanish woman (Maribel Verdú) who is not merely older, but married. Plus, she seems inexplicably happy to take either, or both, of them to bed. All the boys' dreams, in other words, have come true, and they can hardly handle it. What ensues is a sad and sexy picaresque, as everyone's illusions are peeled off along with their clothes. Cuarón's style is so open and relaxed, and his actors are so attuned to one another, that not until the final scene, with its litany of revelations, do we see that what felt life-affirming has also been a meditation on the slide of time, and on the off-stage presence of death. Unrated, and therefore full of proper sex, with all the improprieties intact. In Spanish.—*A.L.* (3/18/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza, 19th Street East 6, and Sunshine Cinema.)

#### ALSO PLAYING

**ABC AFRICA**  
Cinema Village.

**THE CAT'S MEOW**  
84th Street Sixplex, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas.

**A GRIN WITHOUT A CAT**  
Film Forum.

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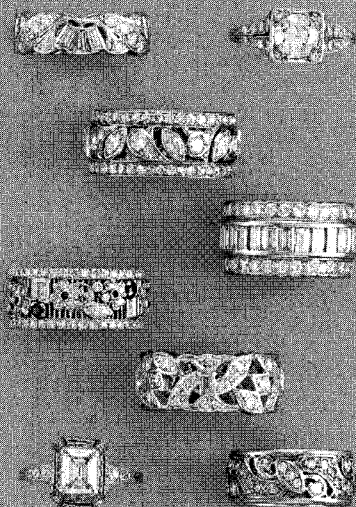
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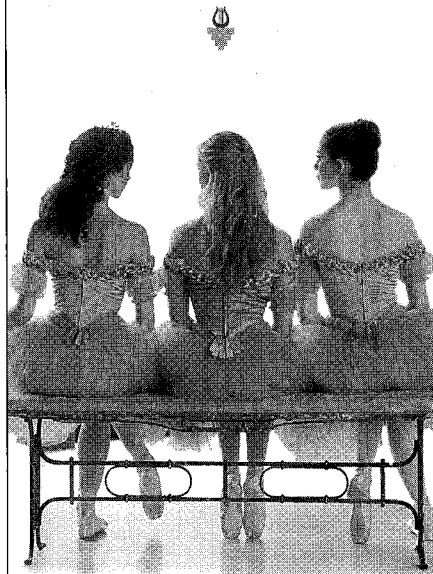


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**HOLLYWOOD ENDING**

BAM Rose Cinemas, Beekman, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

**THE LAST WALTZ**

Union Square.

**MURDEROUS MAIDS**

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.

**RAIN**

Angelika Film Center and Eastside Playhouse.

**SADE**

Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.  
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway  
at 63rd St.

Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.

Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.

New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.

19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.

Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.

Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.

Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.  
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).



Opening May 10, *"The Lady and the Duke,"* a new film by Eric Rohmer.

**THEATRE ADDRESSES**

Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.

BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave.,  
Brooklyn.

Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.

Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.

Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).

East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.

84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.

Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.  
(398-3939).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.

Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave.  
(727-8110).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.

42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.

The Screening Room, 54 Varick St.  
(334-2100).

72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.

64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.

Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.

Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.

34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.

Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.

Village East Cinemas, Second Ave.  
at 12th St.

Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

**REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.**

*Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.*

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE**

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—  
May 11 at 4:30: "The Last Voyage" (1960, An-

drew L. Stone). ♦ May 12 at 1: "Remember the Night" (1940, Mitchell Leisen). ♦ May 12 at 3: "The Four Feathers" (1929, Merian C. Cooper). ♦ May 12 at 5: "After Tomorrow" (1932, Frank Borzage). ♦ Repertory nights. May 11-12 at 6:30: "Vertigo" (1958, Alfred Hitchcock).

**ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES**

32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—May 9-12 at 6:30: "As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty" (2000, Jonas Mekas).

**BAM ROSE CINEMAS**

30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—  
May 8 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control" (1997, Errol Morris). ♦ May 9 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The New Gulliver" (1935, Alexander Prushko; in Russian). ♦ May 10 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The Suspect" (1944, Robert Siodmak). ♦ May 11 at 3, 6, and 9:30: "Serpico" (1973, Sidney Lumet). ♦ May 12 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "Totò in Color" (1952, Steno; in Italian). ♦ May 13 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Sadko" (1953, Prushko; in Russian). ♦ May 14 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The Killers" (1946, Siodmak).

**FILM FORUM**

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—  
Through June 6: "The Great American Comedy." May 8 at 1:30, 5:10, and 8:50: "Topper" (†). ♦ May 8 at 3:20 and 7: "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" (1941, Alexander Hall). ♦ May 9-10 at 1, 4:05, 7:10, and 10:10: "The Bank Dick" (1940, Edward Cline). ♦ May 9-10 at 2:40, 5:45, and 8:50: "Never Give a Sucker an Even Break" (1941, Cline). ♦ May 11-12 at 1:10, 5:10, and 9:10 and May 13 at 2: "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek" (†). ♦ May 11-12 at 3:10 and 7:10 and May 13 at 4: "Hail the Conquering Hero" (1944, Preston Sturges). ♦ May 13 at 7:40: "Hot Water" (1924, Harold Beaudine). ♦ May 13 at 6 and 8:55: "Movie Crazy" (1932, Clyde Bruckman). ♦ May 14 at 3:05 and 7: "The Lady Eve" (1941, Sturges). ♦ May 14 at 1, 4:55, and 8:50: "Ball of Fire" (1941, Howard Hawks).

**FLORENCE GOULD HALL**

55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Through May 21: The films of Jacques Rivette. May 14 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Divertimento" (†).

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Through May 21: "Make Way for Tomorrow," a selection of films from the archive to mark the museum's temporary move to Queens. May 9 at 3 and May 13 at 6: "Black Narcissus" (1947, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger). ♦ May 9 at 6 and May 13 at 3: Two video works about the Inuit, directed by Zacharias Kunuk. ♦ May 10 at 3 and May 14 at 6: "Husbands" (1970, John Cassavetes). ♦ May 10 at 6: "Decasia" (2002, Bill Morrison). ♦ May 14 at 3: "The Battleship Potemkin" (1925, Sergei Eisenstein). ♦ May 11-12: Silent films accompanied by Ben Model playing his "Synth-Org," an instrument with a sound based on the traditional theatre organ. May 11 at 12:30 and May 12 at 3: "The Garage" (1919, Fatty Arbuckle), "The Iron Mule" (1925, Grover Jones), and "Sherlock, Jr." (1924, Buster Keaton). ♦ May 11 at 3 and May 12 at 5:30: "The Cat and the Canary" (1927, Paul Leni). ♦ May 11 at 5:30 and May 12 at 12:30: "The Iron Mask" (1929, Allan Dwan).

**SYMPHONY SPACE**

2537 Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Through July 21: Classic French cinema. May 11 at 2 and May 12 at 2, 6:30, and 8:45: "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" (1964, Jacques Demy). ♦ May 11-12 at 3:45: "Jacquot de Nantes" (1993, Agnès Varda). ♦ May 11 at 6:30 and 9: "Claire's Knee" (1970, Eric Rohmer).

**WALTER READE THEATRE**

Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through May 21: "Landscapes of the Soul: The Cinema of Alexander Dovzhenko." Silent films from the Soviet director, all with live musical accompaniment. May 8 at 2 and 6:15 and May 9 at 4 and 8: "Diplomatic Pouch" (1927). ♦ May 8 at 4:15 and 8:30 and May 9 at 2 and 6:15: "Zvenigora" (1927). ♦ May 10 at 6:30 and 9 and May 11 at 4:15: "Earth" (1930). ♦ May 11 at 2 and 6:15 and May 12 at 8:30: "Arsenal" (1929). ♦ May 14 at 1, 4:45, and 8:30: "Ivan" (1932). ♦ May 14 at 3 and 6:45: "Aerograd" (1935).



courtesy of Turkish Tourist Office



Beyoğlu's meandering Çiçek Pasajı, famous for its market stalls and *meyhanes*.

**R**apid-fire tomtom beats, reedy undulating sounds from an oriental flute, and the jingling of a hundred bangles on the arms of an exotic belly dancer—these are probably the images most of us have of nightlife in Istanbul. If you add in some dark, slightly seedy dens of iniquity with plenty of dense, curling blue smoke from bubbling water pipes—that probably sums it up.

Yet while all of the above—and more—is certainly available in this most Western of Eastern cities, you will also find these stereotypes evaporating if you venture slightly off the tourist track. A brief glance through the weekly listings in any of the city's handful of glossy lifestyle magazines is revealing. Tonight, for example, you could have seen a Swedish d.j. spin the tables at **7th House** (0212 361 0718), caught top French band *Noir Desir* at the **Venue** (no phone), chilled out to some cutting edge jazz at **Gramafon** (0212 293 0786), participated in the Istanbul Drum Circle performance at **Babylon** (0212 292 7368), or, if all that seems too manic, listen to a Polish accordion player at a traditional backstreet drinking and dining house. And that was just the fare on page one of *Time Out Istanbul*.

The truth is, Istanbul has never been so jumping. The nightlife epicenter is Beyoğlu, which lies along the hills on the other side of the Golden Horn from the tourist area. Beyoğlu has an entertainment pedigree going back centuries to the time when, as a Christian and Jewish enclave in a Muslim city, a certain degree of license was allowed here that was strictly prohibited elsewhere.

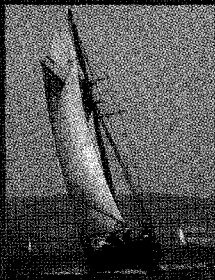
Since the nineteen-nineties, among Beyoğlu's multitude of winding streets dotted with old Greek, Armenian, and Catholic churches, a bar and club explosion has taken place. Off pedestrian-only İstiklal Caddesi are dozens of side streets lined with countless watering holes. The pioneers are French bistro **Kaktüs** (0212 249 5979) and bar and music venue **Hayal Kahvesi** (0212 243 6823). Newcomers range from spit-and-sawdust beer halls (known as *birahanes*) to high-tech and tubular steel bistros with elaborate bar stools. Music can range from none at all in the *birahanes* to the latest Brit, American, and European sounds in **Soho** (0212 245 0152), **Old Beirut** (0212 293 4921), and **Dulcinea** (0212 245 1039).

## NIGHTS IN ISTANBUL

Jonathan Gorvett



# Sea of Kings



Classical civilization came from the sea: the Black Sea, the Aegean, the Mediterranean. Turkey borders them all with 5,000 miles of verdant coast. Odysseus wandered these shores. Cleopatra met Antony here for a romantic tryst. St. Paul stopped at Knidos on his way to Rome. You can too. Only one of the many compelling reasons to discover Turkey this year.



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Come summer many of these bars take to their rooftops. There are few drinking places in the Mediterranean (if not in the world) that have a better view than the terrace of **5th Floor** (0212 293 3774). This stylish bar/club overlooks the subject of many myths, the Bosphorus, which runs through Istanbul and links the Sea of Marmara with the Black Sea. Downstairs is one of the city's premier gay venues, **Bar Bahçe** (0212 243 2879). Other venues with sweeping views of the city are **Life** (0212 244 0486) and **Cambaz** (0212 243 5473), the latter also possessing some of the most manic waiters to be found anywhere.

As for clubs, Beyoğlu's Siraselviler Caddesi, a street at the top end of İstiklal is lined with them. There's world music at **Shaman** (0212 249 9606), any music you care to mention next door at **Kemanci** (0212 251 2723), while the trendy **Roxy** (0212 245 6539) around the corner has the latest dance and trance. The atmosphere in all of them on a Friday or Saturday night is frenetic, with dancing till 4 A.M., when home-going clubbers often block the streets and create awesome traffic jams. At the other end of İstiklal, be sure to check out Babylon, a venue respected for its experimental zeal; it features everything from Mongolian throat singers to drum and bass.

You can just as easily switch off the electronics and get into something else for which the district is famous—its *meyhanes*, traditional eateries with gorgeous food and musicians wandering from table to table. Typically they carry with them a tom-tom, mandolin, fiddle, and three-string Turkish guitar known as a *saz*. In Beyoğlu's famous Cicek Pasaji, a meandering street of market stalls and meyhanes, try the narrow alley just off, Nevizade Sokak. It's crammed full of tables and chairs, and in the evenings the locals indulge in mezes, kebabs, and the all-powerful aniseed national drink, raki. But in this alley you will also see some of the country's best musicians. Usually the tunes, known collectively as *fasıl*, are so popular with the diners that they often join in the chorus or get up for a dance—a true Turkish phenomenon.

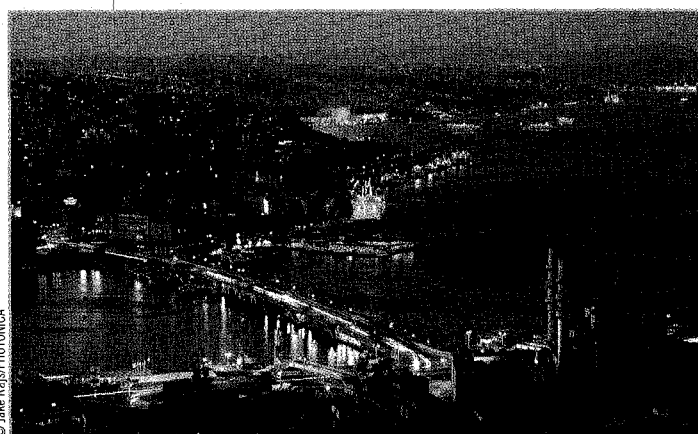
For another kind of music head for **Ferdane** (0212 245 4582), an off-İstiklal dive, where around 1 A.M. (if you're lucky) you'll hear Selim Sesler, one of the great clarinetists in the Balkans, perform *rembetiko*, the strange, wistful, romantic music that mixes Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian, Jewish, and Gypsy sounds. The rembetiko master might finally pause for a breath in the dingy light of this barroom, packed with nighthawks just as the new day dawns, only to hand over the stage to his son Bulent, who has been charged with the task of continuing this tradition.

In summer, the nights are thick with heat, and many take to the cooler shores of the Bosphorus. Heading north out of the city center along the coast takes you to a clutch of open-air clubs, while night boats can also take you over to one of the most popular of these shore-breeze venues, **Cubuklu Hayal Kahvesi** (0216 413 6880). Prices jump almost as much as the crowds here, but one doesn't often get the chance to glide straight onto the dance floor from the deck of a high-speed launch.

While it might be time to think about heading home afterward, one more stop is recommended. Down on the waterfront below Beyoğlu lies the Sali Pazar, an area where the old docks are, which has been given over to cafés. Open late, these cafés serve strong, black Turkish coffee along with *nargiles*—water pipes. If you've never tried a Turkish water pipe, it might be time to forget all of the sound medical advice you've heard, and—just this once—try puffing on some apple-flavored tobacco, filtered through cooling water, and breathe it out into the dark night air. Look around at the tall minarets and centuries-old mosques while you recover from the exertions of a night's clubbing and barhopping. These cafés are good places to reflect on just how deceptive stereotypes can be.

Oh, and the belly dancers. If you insist, try **Kazablanka** (0212 293 6212) in Beyoğlu for the very best.

Jonathan Gorvett is the Turkish correspondent for *The Boston Globe*.



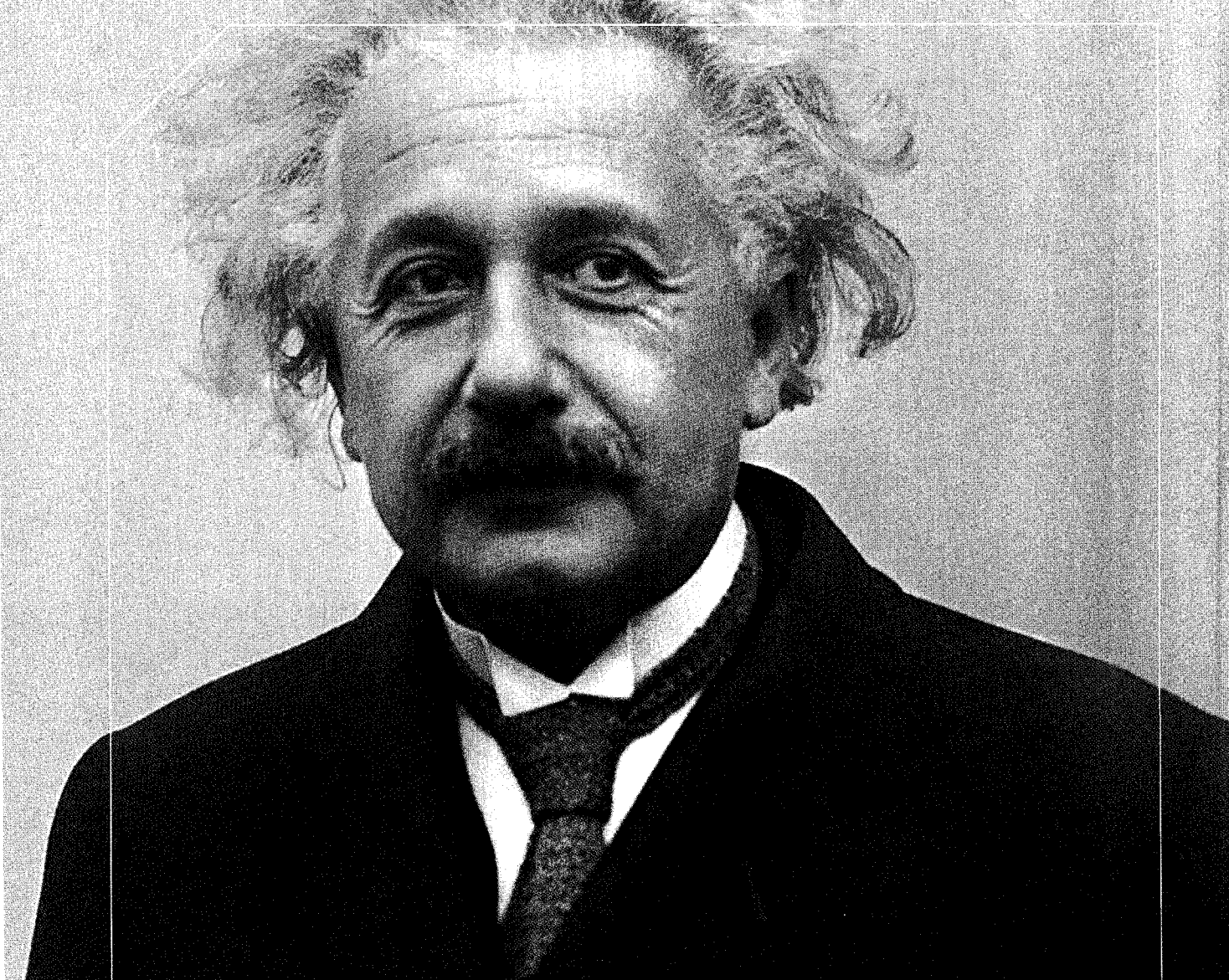
Istanbul, city of minarets, is known also for its vibrant nightlife.



Stunning views from the Marmara Istanbul.

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## THE TALK OF THE TOWN

### COMMENT SILLY IDEAS



Academic-freedom cases frequently are fuzzy. Sometimes they involve professors who use offensive language in the sincere hope of annoying people. Sometimes they involve activities that are not included in the job description—things said and done off campus or for non-academic audiences. More often, probably, than outsiders realize, the professor who claims that his or her right of free speech has been violated is just a career irritant whose colleagues have finally had enough. These are all situations in which the normally delightful push and pull of academic bickering has become sufficiently violent and disruptive for the academic-freedom police to be called in. But a case in which a legislative body cuts funding for a public university because of an article that one of its professors published in a scholarly journal, which is what happened recently in Missouri, is not a fuzzy case. That is about as clear-cut a violation of the principle of academic freedom as you can get.

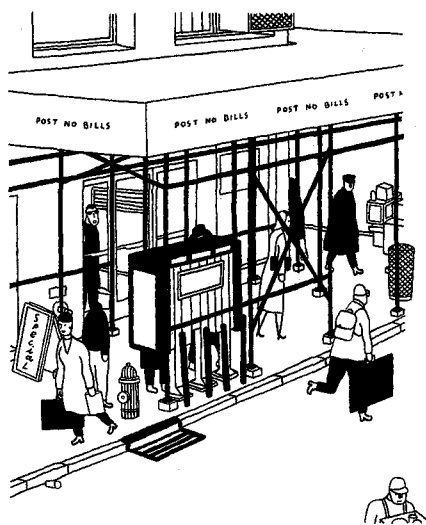
The professor is Harris Mirkin, who teaches in the political-science department at the University of Missouri's Kansas City campus. The article at issue is "The Pattern of Sexual Politics: Feminism, Homosexuality, and Pedophilia,"

published in the *Journal of Homosexuality*, in 1999. The legislative body is the Missouri House of Representatives, which voted, 102 to 29, to cut a hundred thousand dollars from the university's appropriation—an amount roughly equivalent to Professor Mirkin's compensation—after a story about his work appeared in the *Kansas City Star*. The State Senate approved the cut; the governor, according to a report in the *Times*, has not yet taken a position on the matter. No one is actually going to fire or suspend Professor Mirkin; as an employee of a public university, he is protected by the First Amendment. So the hundred-thousand-dollar hit that his article occasioned will most likely be felt in unrelated areas, such as reduced student services and smaller consignments of Xerox paper.

Professor Mirkin published a silly article. It purports to show that the current

situation of pedophiles is analogous to the situation of homosexuals before the gay-rights movement and of women before the women's movement. Pedophilia, he argues, is regarded by almost everyone who is not a pedophile as unnatural, depraved, criminal; but many heterosexuals once thought that homosexuality was a disease and an offense against God and nature, and many men once thought that sexually active women were monsters. In each of the earlier cases, the dominant group maintained that there was a "natural" type of sexual behavior. And, in each case, once it was demonstrated that what people believe to be "natural" is just a "social construction," devised by the dominant group to preserve its own status, then the "deviant" group was on its way to acceptance. Mirkin suggested that pedophiles might be at this stage. When people realize that in earlier times sex between men and boys was thought to be unexceptionable, they will see that the present taboo is a convention, and not based on anything real. "Like homosexuality," Mirkin writes, "the concept of child molestation is a culture- and class-specific modern creation." No doubt, as a student of contingency, he appreciates the irony that his views have become widely known not because pedophiles are gaining acceptance (as he seemed to predict) but because of the scandal in the Catholic Church.

Professor Mirkin explained to the *Times* that his article was "meant to be subversive." Subversiveness is acceptable as a by-product of scholarly inquiry; but





it is unworthy as a goal. The goal of inquiry is (in the deathless words of Howard Cosell) to tell it like it is. If beliefs and assumptions are thereby subverted, so be it. That's one of the reasons the protection of academic freedom exists. No reader of Mirkin's article will think that he is advocating sex with children (he has said that he is not himself a pedophile), but few readers will feel that he is committed to presenting a balanced analysis. The article falls short of advocacy, but it feels some distance from disinterestedness. For millennia, many human beings believed that the institution of chattel slavery was unexceptionable. That is hardly an argument for viewing a revival of the practice with equanimity. The campaign to abolish slavery, like the campaigns to grant women and homosexuals equality, was inspired less by a concern with what is "natural" than by the feeling that it is wrong for some people to have power over the intimate lives of other people. Surely the prohibition of pedophilia is *part of* the movement for civil and sexual freedom—in this case, the freedom of children from grownups who are in positions of authority over them, such as, for example, their priests.

Still, Professor Mirkin and his defenders (who include the university's chancellor, Martha W. Gilliland) are correct to insist that, whether anyone likes his article or not, it is wrong for the state of Missouri to sanction him or his institution because of it. People who are not academics find the principle of academic freedom a little puzzling. Scholars are paid to produce knowledge and ideas. If they're obviously way off base, why shouldn't they have their pay docked, or be sacked? That's what happens to investment analysts and engineers and reporters. What gives professors the right to get it wrong?

The answer is that knowledge and ideas *are* social constructions, in the sense that they are produced by many people working, not necessarily together but in concert, which is what universities are set up to make happen. Every idea or piece of knowledge worth having is, in part, a response to ideas or knowledge less worth having. Refuting a bad argument makes a good argument stronger. Worse ideas are the frames around better ideas. We don't tell people they can't vote be-

cause they keep choosing losing candidates. Democracy requires full participation. Knowledge is the same. You can't have truth unless you are prepared to tolerate error, and even to pay its salary.

—Louis Menand

## CHECKING IT TWICE DEPT. HERE'S JOHNNIE



If you happened to take the US Airways shuttle from Logan to LaGuardia on March 23rd, you might have been stuck for a good while behind Johnnie Thomas, a seventy-year-old African-American woman at the head of the check-in line. The ticket agent disappeared with Thomas's passport, and did not return for half an hour. When she did, she told Thomas that she was cleared to fly, but that, from now on, each time she checked in US Airways would be required to call the state police, who would call the F.B.I., who would run a check on the date and place of her birth.

"It's not your fault," she told Thomas. "It's just that your name is on the master terrorist list."

Eight days earlier, at LaGuardia, the same thing had happened, and Thomas had laughed it off. (The agent had told her, "You seem like a real nice lady, but please don't come to me the next time you're at LaGuardia.") The second time, though, Thomas was not amused. She had just spent a fine week on Martha's Vineyard with her grandchildren, and was in no mood to argue that she wasn't a terrorist.

March 23rd was a Saturday. On Monday morning, at home in Wayne, New Jersey, Thomas got busy on the telephone, making notes on each call.

She called the F.B.I. office in Paterson. "If you want your name off the list, hire a lawyer," said the man who returned her call. He refused to give his name.

She called the Washington offices of the United States senators from New Jersey and Montana—she spends time each year in Miles City, Montana, where her late husband grew up—but no one offered a quick solution.

She called Denise Hartse, a reporter

at the Miles City *Star*, who put her in touch with the F.B.I.'s counterterrorism specialist in Billings, who suggested that she call the Federal Aviation Administration. The number the phone book gave for the F.A.A. in Bergen County turned out not to be in service.

She called the Transportation Security Administration. Pay dirt! A Mrs. Boyd at the T.S.A. told Johnnie Thomas that she was on an F.B.I. "no fly" list because John Thomas Christopher was one of the aliases used by Christian Michael Longo, who had been arrested on January 13th at a beach camp in the Yucatán and charged with murdering his wife and three children. At the time of his arrest, he had been on the F.B.I.'s Ten Most Wanted list for two days; he is now in jail in Oregon awaiting trial. Longo was born in 1974 and has blue eyes and reddish-blond hair.

O.K., Thomas thought, it's a big, complicated country. Perhaps the T.S.A. could remove her name from the list? No, said Mrs. Boyd. Only the F.B.I. could do that.

Thomas called a friend who had been in the foreign service, who called a colleague, who called an F.B.I. counterterrorism expert, who said that some entities called the N.I.S.D.B. and the N.G.A.T. (even he did not know what the letters stood for) could maybe "scrub the database" to remove her name. "I have no idea what either of them is," Thomas said. "Mrs. Boyd said maybe I should call the A.C.L.U."

Instead, Thomas called F.B.I. headquarters in Washington, where she was directed to the Fugitive Publicity Unit, which told her to talk to Supervisory Special Agent Rob Haley, in the Criminal Investigative Division. Haley checked with the Oregon F.B.I. and discovered that one airline had indeed been alerted during the manhunt for Longo, but US Airways was not it, so he couldn't say how Thomas's name had ended up on the list. He said he couldn't speak for "the counterterrorism side of the house." He suggested that she call her local F.B.I. office. "That's where I started!" she said. He told her that airline watch lists are generated from many different sources. He would check further, but he wasn't optimistic that he could get her name removed. "He said to be patient," Thomas said. Mrs. Boyd, mean-



while, informed her that four other law-abiding John Thomases had called to complain.

By this time, Thomas had been making calls for two weeks. On April 13th, she checked in at US Airways at LaGuardia for another trip to the Vineyard. This time, to her surprise, her name had the word "error" next to it on the computer screen. The ticket agent consulted briefly with his supervisor and checked her through. "Obviously, somebody had talked to somebody," Thomas said.

When, four days later, she returned through Logan, her name on the screen carried a new label: "Not allowed to fly." The agent consulted with his supervisor, and Thomas was directed to a back room, where her checked luggage was X-rayed. At the security gate, her carry-on bag was opened. At the ramp, her carry-on bag was opened again, and she stretched her arms wide for the top-toe wand.

"Something different happens every time," she said last week. "It's scary. It's surreal—so surreal that I've written a rap song about it. Here's the last verse. It's in the voice of the F.B.I.: 'The identity of the anthraxer is a mystery, that's true / But Mrs. Thomas, give us credit, we did catch you! / Say uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh!'"

—Deirdre McNamer

## OPENING NIGHT AN ART-HOUSE EPIC



By the middle of last week, outside the Ziegfeld Theatre, a line had begun to form of would-be patrons of "Star Wars, Episode II: Attack of the Clones," which opens on May 16th. If the "Star Wars" aficionados had gained entrance to the theatre on Wednesday night, when it was taken over for a benefit screening of a new film by the artist Matthew Barney, they might have discovered much to their taste. Like "Star Wars," Barney's film is part of an epic cycle that has been released out of order: this episode is "Cremaster 3," but "Cremaster's 4 and 5, as well as 1 and 2, have come and gone. Barney, like George Lucas, favors impressive pros-

thetics and special effects: a giant with a particularly unpleasant skin condition lumbering over a Scottish island, palming sheep as snacks; a demolition derby being conducted in the lobby of the Chrysler Building with five 1967 Chrysler Imperials crushing a Chrysler New Yorker that contains a zombie's remains. And, like "Star Wars," "Cremaster 3" includes all kinds of references to previous "Cremaster"s: the zombie, for example, is all that is left of the murderer Gary Gilmore, who was depicted, alive, in "Cremaster 2." The "Star Wars" fans might have been somewhat daunted, however, by the absence of dialogue in "Cremaster 3," which makes distinguishing between the forces of good and the forces of evil that much more complicated. And certain parts of the movie, which is three hours long, are not suitable for family viewing, including a sequence in which five dancers parade around the Guggenheim Museum in high heels, G-strings, and tasselled pasties—the kind of exhibition that even Thomas Krens, the populist director of the museum, might have trouble getting past his board.

Hardly less daring was the gown worn to the premiere by the movie's leading lady, Aimee Mullins: a beige, floor-length number with a deeply plunging backline skimming buttocks that could star in "StairMaster 3." Mullins, who is a double amputee, plays a number of roles in the film, including one in which she wears a backless dress over a pair of translucent high-heeled legs, and another in which she is changed into a cheetah woman, stalking her prey—Barney, in a pink tartan kilt and pink feathered busby—on hind legs that end not in human feet but in feline paws. "It was very physically demanding, but my background as an athlete helped," said Mullins, who was teetering slightly in strappy sandals. ("These legs have, like, Barbie feet, and the heels of the shoes are an inch too short," she explained, as if all actresses endured such trials.)

Also present was the sculptor Richard Serra, who appears in the film. He plays an architect who, in the movie's conclusion, battles with Barney in the spire of the Chrysler Building. "We had an enormous fight," Serra said with relish. In another scene, Serra is shown at the top of the Guggenheim spiral, hurling

sloppy shovelfuls of molten Vaseline, a favorite material of Barney's, in a reference to Serra's own thrown-lead pieces. "This is Matthew Barney's universe," Thomas Krens, who'd arranged for Barney to film the scenes in the museum, said. (The Guggenheim is presenting a Barney retrospective next year.)

The trappings of a movie premiere—



Matthew Barney

paparazzi, effusive supporters, hard-to-snap glasses of champagne—are not, apparently, Matthew Barney's universe: Barney, who is thirty-five years old and could be called movie-star handsome even if he hadn't starred in five movies of his own, was barely spotted in the lobby before the screening. "He's an artist, and he's very camera-shy for someone who appears so much on camera," Nancy Spector, the retrospective's curator, said, attempting to mollify aggrieved photographers who had been waiting for red-carpet shots. The limits of Barney's camera-shyness were demonstrated in the movie by a scene in which he is pinioned, half naked, to a dentist's chair, with a large skirt made of flesh growing from his belly. Barney, who materialized at the last minute, watched the movie sitting alongside Björk, his girlfriend. "Cremaster 3" is the final episode in the movie cycle, but it was announced earlier in the day that Barney has a new project under way: Björk is expecting a baby in the fall. "Cremaster 6," one of the guests said, with a fond air of congratulation appropriate to the event.

—Rebecca Mead



## THE PICTURES A BILLION-DOLLAR MAN



Coming soon to the big screen is "The Sum of All Fears," the fourth, most terrifying, and most comprehensive of the Tom Clancy-based action thrillers. This one incorporates everything: international spies, neo-Nazis, corrupt Russian generals, shooting-bombing-garrotting-crashing-exploding-crushing-crippling disasters, with both biological and nu-

clear attacks. All four movies have been made by Mace Neufeld, a quiet, retiring producer, who belongs to what is known as the One-Billion-Dollar Club. Its single qualification for membership: make movies that collectively earn a billion or more at the box office.

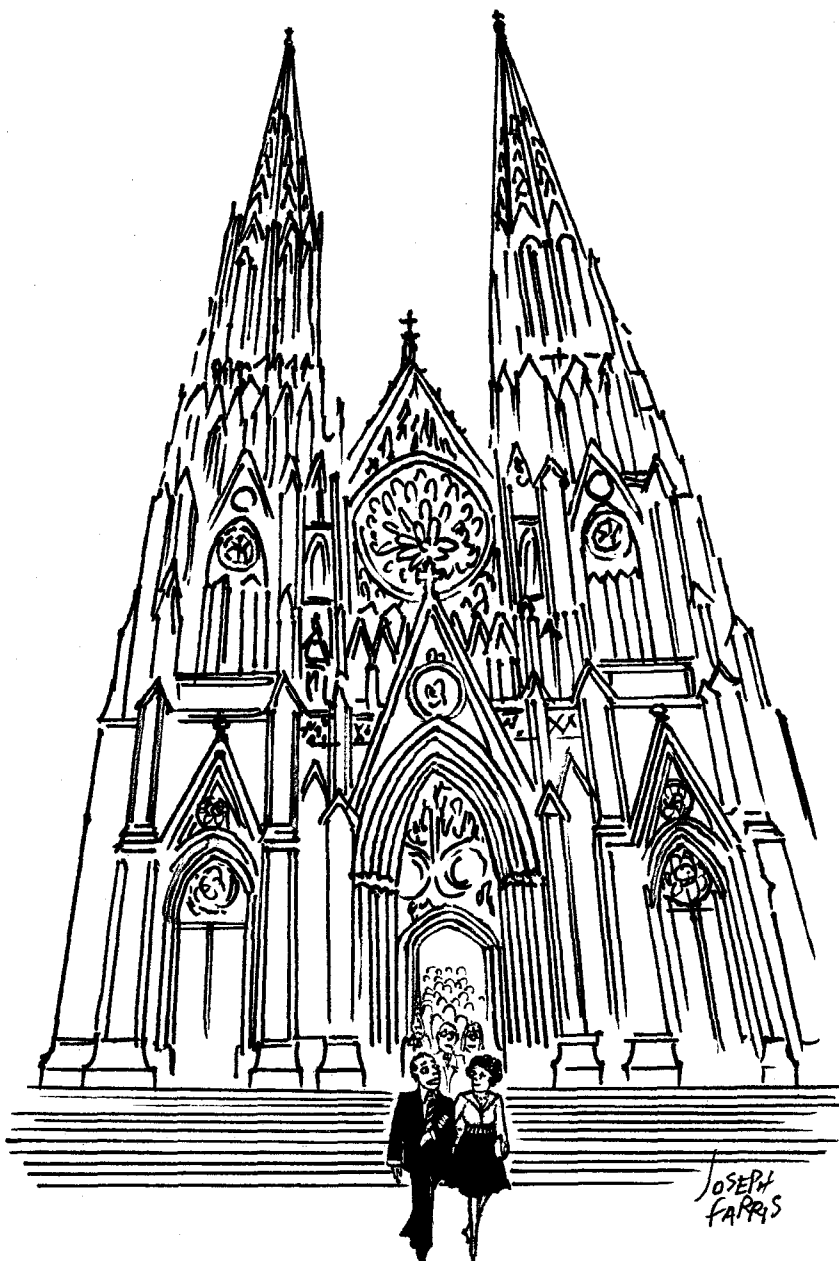
In Beverly Hills the other day, Neufeld calmly entered the Grill, the lunching hub of risen and still rising movie-business bigwigs. He was subtly tanned and in admirable physical shape, with splendid posture and thick, peppered gray hair carefully barbered. He was attired in the classic uniform of a powerful producer: black high-necked Italian sports shirt, black designer suit, black Me-

phistos. The other lunchers, mostly a bit younger, including fashionably appointed, ultra-slim, cool-eyed female counterparts, were inspecting entrances, but no heads turned as Neufeld came on the scene. A young, harried maître d', looking somewhat apologetic, led Neufeld to the last booth in a back corner.

"This waiting for a response to the film is a very nervous time for me," Neufeld said, with an easy, non-nervous smile. He crossed the second and third fingers of both hands, put them over his head, and wiggled them. He glanced tolerantly at his fellow-lunchers. "I don't do the socializing," he said. "On my way here, I spotted John Travolta's agent in his car. That's about as close as I get to the celebrated stars. I have three children and seven grandchildren, and I like to go home and be with them. I've lived in the same Beverly Hills house for thirty-seven years." He studied the menu and looked around for a waiter, who was a noticeably long time in appearing.

"In Europe, they tell me about my 'body of work,'" he said, with a genuine bubble of laughter. "Here it's different. Steven Spielberg is the preëminent producer, and rightly so. There are about a dozen other well-known names in the club, like George Lucas, Jerry Bruckheimer, Joel Silver, Scott Rudin, Brian Grazer. My movies are up near the top, in terms of worldwide box-office grosses: 'The Hunt for Red October,' \$199.2 million; 'Patriot Games,' \$178 million; 'Clear and Present Danger,' \$207.5. And, of course, I've done other things. My movie based on Nelson DeMille's 'The General's Daughter,' in 1999, grossed a hundred and eighty million. Those numbers, of course, don't include video, television, cable, pay-per-view, all that."

The waiter appeared, and Neufeld ordered Campari on ice and steak tartare. "I do only one movie at a time," he said. "It took eleven years since the book was published to plan this one. Took about five months to shoot, working in the Death Valley desert in hundred-and-thirty-degree heat and in Montreal's snows of twenty-five below. Clancy lives in Maryland and never comes to the set. He hates to fly. He came out here a few years ago, with his family, on the train. But our director, Phil Alden Robinson—who is, like Clancy, seriously concerned with real problems in the real



*"The Cardinal seemed a little preoccupied today."*



world—had long telephone consultations with Clancy. At Clancy's suggestion, we made the Russian bombing of Chechnya biological, not nuclear, and we saved the nuclear bombing, by an American renegade, for the U.S.A."

Neufeld quickly polished off the steak and sipped his drink. He smiled at the table-hopping going on nearby. "I love making films so much, but I'm unsettled at the moment," he said. "I keep thinking about the 'refrigerator questions' we might get about 'The Sum of All Fears.' These are questions from people who get home from a movie and open the refrigerator and think, Now, wait a minute . . ."

Neufeld raised his arms overhead and crossed his fingers again. "Our nuclear explosion in the film was a low-yield one," he said. "The movie is now locked except for the soundtrack, but just today we added an explanatory line for a refrigerator question about nuclear damage to the earth. To take care of that, we have someone say, 'The winds are blowing east.' What we're saying in our film is relative to the current political situation." He gave a short laugh. "But forget the movie. I'm nervous about the political situation."

"I started out in New York, as a photographer and a songwriter, playing popular music on the piano," he said. "I came here in 1962, with my wife and two little boys, and never left. I did a lot of television—'Cagney & Lacey,' 'East of Eden,' 'Gettysburg.' A lot. Now movies. I just turned in my Jaguar for an Infiniti Q45. Not only does it get me there, it talks to me and makes me happy. I want to sit down at the piano, but people come to me and say, 'This is your kind of film.' I'm a victim of my success."

—Lillian Ross

## NINE LIVES DEPT. BOOKSTORE CAT



**T**he first time Andreas Brown, the owner of the Gotham Book Mart, laid eyes on his enormous orange tabby cat, it was chasing three smaller cats around his sister's house in San Diego

and pursuing an occasional seagull up and down her porch steps. "I had to have him," Brown said the other day. "And so, about four years ago, when my sister moved, she agreed to send him to me by air." The cat was flown non-stop from California to J.F.K. in a pet carrier in the cargo hold. His new owner met him at the airport and took him in a taxi



to his new residence, on West Forty-seventh Street.

Frances Steloff, the founder of the Gotham Book Mart, from whom Brown bought the shop in 1967, always had cats, and left money to half a dozen animal organizations when she died, in 1989, at the age of a hundred and one. Her last three cats had literary names—Thornton (Wilder), Christopher (Morley), and Mitchell (Kennerley). Brown decided to call his huge new tomcat Pynchon.

When Pynchon came East, the Gotham was down to one cat—Mitchell, who died a few months later. The shop became a one-cat bookstore again. "He's plenty to deal with," Brown said.

Pynchon has the run of the five-floor building, which houses the shop, a gallery, storage space, and Brown's apartment. He is the perfect bookstore cat. He purrs when customers pet him. He poses for photographs dressed in T-shirts or tuxedos designed for dogs, and wearing a graduation cap or a sombrero or whatever else the staff puts on him. He attends meetings of the James Joyce Society, which are held in the second-floor gallery.

Because Pynchon arrived in New York with no front claws, he became an indoor cat. His most notable outings since then were in the winter of 1999. Brown, egged on by his staff and proud of his wondrous green-eyed, pink-nosed acquisition, entered him in the domestic-house-pet division of the annual cat show at Madison Square Garden. As Brown recalls, "I put this very large cat into this very heavy carrier and had a devil of a time hailing cabs on freezing-cold mornings. Once we got to the show, Pynchon won several nice-looking ribbons, but he was marked down in a couple of rounds of judging for being too heavy. 'Overweight for a cat is the death knell,' one judge admonished. 'He'll get diabetes. True cat-lovers do not allow their cats to weigh as much as tiger cubs.' This made me mad, because I'd dieted Pynchon down from his arrival weight of twenty-eight pounds plus to twenty-five pounds. Our mail scale is absolutely accurate. On one show day, Pynchon was freaked out by the hundreds of other cats he smelled and heard and saw. He managed to get out of his cage with his clawless front paws and took off in the Garden for parts unknown. He was eventually found hiding behind a velour drape, huddled against a wall. After a few days of schlepping Pynchon to and from the Garden, I said 'Never again,' so Pynchon's days as a show cat are over."

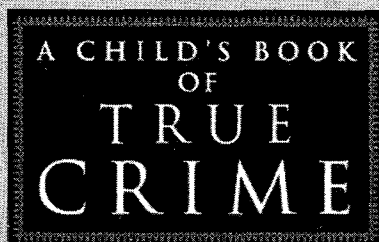
Pynchon's years on Forty-seventh Street are also coming to an end. The Gotham Book Mart is in the middle of a block dominated by the diamond and jewelry trade and the building is therefore considered more valuable than a similar one a block or two away. Brown owns air rights to the building, and has put it up for sale for \$7.9 million. Brown reckons he can sell books in a bigger but less expensive building, without air rights, somewhere in the general vicinity. He figures Pynchon will easily adapt to his next home. "He'll still have the whole staff to anticipate his needs six days a week," he said. "I'll still leave the radio above my desk tuned to classical music for him every evening when I go out for dinner. And he'll still greet our customers, many of whom come in just to visit him. This cat is tall, like his namesake, but he is no recluse."

—Susan Sheehan



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THE POLITICAL SCENE

## AFTER STROM

*Can a cracker-barrel fabulist capture South Carolina's Senate seat?*

BY JOE KLEIN

"Do you want to know what I do all day?" asked Alex Sanders, who is the Democratic candidate seeking to replace Strom Thurmond as United States senator from South Carolina this year. "I sit at a desk with a telephone. A woman named Ashley Newton sits across from me with pieces of paper called focus sheets and a stopwatch. She hands me a focus sheet, which has the name and phone number and some vital information about a potential contributor. I call the number. She starts the stopwatch. I have six minutes to make the sale. I'm supposed to make ten calls per hour. So I start out like this: 'Hello, my name is Alex Sanders, and I'm running for the United States Senate. Have you ever heard of me in your whole entire life?' Then I chat with him for a moment about life at his horse farm, or whatever. I tell him that I know about the horse farm because I have this focus sheet with all his information. And then I say, 'I'm not calling to ask for your vote. It'd be a waste of time to make a phone call for a single vote. My purpose is far more humiliating. It's the chemotherapy of a political campaign. It's painful.'" He paused. "Wouldja give me some money?"

Sanders is sixty-three, but his sensibility seems much older—from the time before radio, when people entertained each other by telling yarns. He is a burly, deliberate man, with heavy-lidded eyes that appear to require some miracle of physiological hydraulics, perhaps involving support from his eyebrows, in order to remain open. He has a weathered, scratchy voice and a thick, juicy Carolina accent. Every word he utters is carefully unpacked, inspected, reassembled, and inflected, usually in the service of drollery. "Chemotherapy," for example, comes out something like this: keh-moh-THER-peh, with a chuckle embedded in the middle. He is considered an underdog in the race to replace Thurmond; his opponent, Representative Lindsey Graham,

is formidable. South Carolina is a Republican state. But Sanders's success or failure hardly seems the point—and Graham is almost an afterthought. The real contest here is between an American archetype, the cracker-barrel fabulist, and the consultant-driven sterility of the current political system.

Sanders ambles through his campaign paces, amazed by practically everything he encounters, gratified by the vast bounty of new material he can use to entertain his friends; he seems a fly on the wall of his own candidacy. And yet it is a serious campaign. Sanders is an estimable man, the former chief judge of the South Carolina Court of Appeals and, most recently, the president of the College of Charleston. He is well known and quite popular in the state. Lee Bandy, who has covered South Carolina politics for the *State* newspaper for thirty-six years, says that Sanders is doing surprisingly well and that the race may turn out to be a dead heat. Given the bare majority that Democrats enjoy in the Senate—and the fact that South Carolina may stage the earliest Presidential primary in the South in 2004—the Sanders campaign seems likely to become a fund-raising magnet for ambitious national Democrats. (Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, and Senators Joseph Lieberman, Christopher Dodd, and John Kerry have already visited.) But the attraction of the Sanders campaign is even more theatrical than it is political.

Indeed, we've left the Democratic candidate only halfway through his disquisition on the vagaries of fund-raising. "If they say yes," Sanders went on, "I tell them, 'I have two more questions, and these are far more humiliating than the last. First, I am so *sor-ry* to have to ask, but... When you gonna send the money? Can you send it today?' And then I say, 'Now, this last question is so embarrassing that I can't hardly even bring myself to say it, but... How *much*?' And before





*"That's Alex's way," one of Sanders's admirers says. "He doesn't hector. He persuades. He charms." Photograph by Larry Fink.*

they can think about it I jump in and say, 'How 'bout a thousand bucks?'" Sanders, who was wearing the straightest political uniform imaginable—blue blazer, gray slacks, white shirt, striped tie—leaned back in his chair and laughed devilishly. "That's a good trick, jumping in like that. They usually say, 'Well . . . O.K. I'll give a thousand.'"

Actually, that was the second time Alex Sanders told me that story. I had requested a replay because he'd first told it to me at LaGuardia Airport in late February and I hadn't been tak-

ing notes. I was about to board a plane to Charleston to see Sanders when he appeared before me in the departure lounge. He was heading home, after a weekend of Northern fund-raising and of asking various Democratic constituency groups for support, and he was bursting with adventures. "I met with a bunch of American Civil Liberties Union types," he said right off. "They heard my accent and seemed to look at me askance. So I said to them, 'I know all about you. You're the folks who believe in every amendment to the Constitution except the Second Amend-

ment.'" (Sanders, in fact, was for some years a member of the A.C.L.U. He has also been a member of the National Rifle Association, the N.A.A.C.P., the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and quite a few environmental groups. He has told friends that he tries to join just about everything he can. It's his way of dealing with the special interests.)

For the next two hours and fifteen minutes after we boarded the plane, Sanders told stories. There was the one about the Jewish fellow who went to New York and became a Communist for a while; eventually he returned home to



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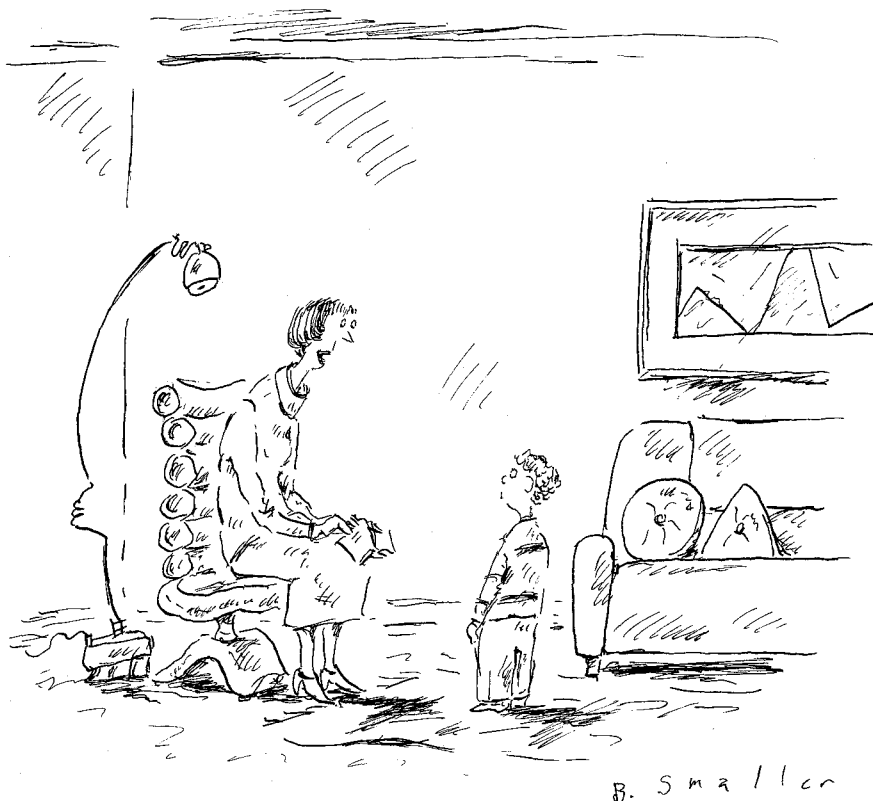
South Carolina and joined the family business, running a drygoods store in a small town full of Klansmen. Agents from the F.B.I. followed him South, and threatened to tell everyone in town about his past if he didn't cooperate with them. Walking home from the session with the F.B.I., he saw an old-fashioned Gospel tent meeting. "He walked down the sawdust trail," Sanders said, "accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour, and confessed all his sins, including the sin of having been a Communist and his recent experience with the F.B.I. Well, people in the South just love those who have fallen into sin and ask forgiveness. And Klansmen don't have much sympathy for the F.B.I. He never had any trouble in town after that."

The drygoods story—which lasted about fifteen minutes and had several more dénouements after the Come to Jesus scene—led to a story about a small-town furniture-store owner who became president of the national association of small-town furniture-store owners and invited former President Gerald Ford to speak at his installation. And that led to a story about Georgia's governor Carl Sanders, who was Alex Sanders's distant cousin, and who was defeated by Jimmy

Carter in the 1970 primary. Sanders was still talking when we parted, promising to tell me about how he donated his daughter, at the age of seven, to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. "She was a midget," he said. "She performed in the center ring. She was the bride of the world's shortest man."

It is said that some politicians—Al Gore, for example—speak in perfect paragraphs; Alex Sanders seems to speak in novellas. "Half the stories in my books, I stole from Alex," the novelist Pat Conroy told me a few days after my plane ride with Sanders. We were having lunch at Jestine's Kitchen, the famed soul-food restaurant in Charleston. "You could take that plane ride five more—no, twenty more—times and he wouldn't run out of stories. I keep waiting for it with dread: the night that he just runs out. He hasn't yet. It's like hanging out with Mark Twain."

As remarkable a quality as this is, it is not one particularly prized by political consultants. "They want me to be 'on message,'" Sanders told me over shad roe at a restaurant in Greenville, South Carolina, in early April. (Sanders loves food—he once ran for the state legislature with the slogan "Give the fat kid a



*"Why are you special? Because I'm your mommy, and I'm special."*



chance"—and is reputed to be an excellent cook.) "We just had this big meeting. All the consultants. They came from Washington, D.C., and from California. One fellow stood at a blackboard and drew a box. It's called the Message Box. I never heard of such a thing. Inside the box he wrote, 'Education, Health Care, Personal Experience, Not a Fierce Partisan.' These are the things I'm supposed to talk about. I'm allowed to have opinions about other things, but I'm not supposed to bring them up. If that's the campaign I'm supposed to run, I think I'll die. I will surely bore myself to death."

The consultants also asked Sanders to change his position on the death penalty. He's against it. Lindsey Graham is for it, and every political expert in South Carolina can see the television ads that are sure to come: the World Trade Center collapsing, then photographs of Osama bin Laden, Mohamed Atta, and the others, and the words "Alex Sanders is against the death penalty . . . even for terrorists!" Those ads, plus the active religious wing of the Republican Party, plus Strom Thurmond's endorsement and South Carolina's essential, though not always bankable, conservatism, are Lindsey Graham's chief weapons in the campaign.

"The consultants had a very intelligent position," Sanders went on. "They said that I could be for the death penalty for terrorists, because it was a time of war. I agree with what President Bush has done in Afghanistan. And I don't think there's any such thing as a pacifist. So I agreed to think about it. But I rejected it for this reason: Why should we give the terrorists precisely what they want? They want to die. They want to be martyrs. I would much rather have them sitting in an iron box for the rest of their lives, contemplating their ignominy."

Sanders is stubborn about his beliefs, and claims never to have changed a political position. "I'm not saying my positions haven't evolved. I've always been a very strong environmentalist, and I still consider myself to be one. But at one time I thought that the population question was the alpha and omega of the problem. I don't think that anymore; we've learned the perils of extrapolation. It's like saying that, because there were seventy-three licensed Elvis impersonators in 1970 and three thousand eight

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— Steve Earle

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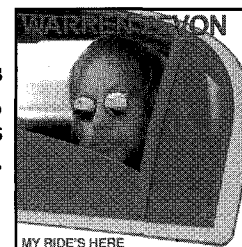


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*"Don't you hate it when you plant evidence but forget where?"*

hundred and forty Elvis impersonators in 1990, seven out of ten human beings on the planet will be Elvis impersonators in the year 3000."

Sanders introduced himself to South Carolina as an environmentalist. As a young state representative from Columbia, which is situated in the middle of the state, he inserted himself into a coastal debate in 1970, leading a successful campaign against the German chemical company B.A.S.F., which planned to build a plant on a pristine waterway near Hilton Head Island. "B.A.S.F. had the full support of all the powers of government. There was no body of environmental law in South Carolina at that time. But I don't want you to believe that I was a Don Quixote," Sanders explained. "I chose my battles carefully. If you don't have a million dollars on both sides of an issue, you don't have an issue. In that case, I had the very wealthy Hilton Head community on my side. In a later effort, which was to stop logging in the Santee Swamp, I had the hunters and fishermen of South Carolina on my side."

The Santee campaign, in 1971, centered on Sanders's contention that he had heard the call of the ivory-billed woodpecker, a species widely assumed to be long extinct. He had heard rumors of the bird's existence, he said, from local residents, and he decided to explore the swamp with an ornithologist from the

Audubon Society and a tape of the woodpecker's cry. "We played the tape and the call came back," Sanders insisted, with extravagantly blunted affect. "I do not care that some people called the exercise a 'patent fraud.' I do not care that some people said that this was comparable to discovering a living dinosaur or proving the existence of angels. I heard the call and the state legislature accepted my claim." He paused and went on, "Of course, if that hadn't worked, I was prepared to announce the discovery of a long-lost Civil War battlefield in the swamp. We had the cannonballs ready."

Pat Conroy says, "Alex is the sort of guy who will hear an ivory-billed woodpecker when he needs to."

Alex Sanders grew up in Columbia. He met his wife, Zoe (pronounced Zo) Dutrow, in a local playground some sixty years ago. They were four years old. Zoe claims that she made an immediate impression on Alex by eating "roly-poly bugs"—"You just popped them in your mouth and swallowed them like BBs," she told me—an early indication that she was not destined to become the sort of Southern woman who giggles, blushes, and charms her way through life. Instead, she became the sort of Southern woman who guffaws, says what is on her mind, and charms her way through life.

The Sanders and Dutrow families were among the interesting poor. Alex's mother was a schoolteacher; his father arranged hunting and fishing trips. Zoe's father was a commercial artist and a violin player; her mother played the piano. The Dutrows lived in public housing; the Sanders family lived in a small house. "My mother taught me to love learning, and she also gave me my political values," Sanders told me. "My father was not a learned man, but he taught me a lot—I think my love of nature and animals came from him. He taught me never to kill a hawk, even though hawks preyed upon the quail and ducks we loved to hunt. Hawks were part of the circle of nature; they were hunters, just as we were."

Both Alex and Zoe took their youthful hobbies seriously. Zoe became the skeet-shooting champion of South Carolina; Alex joined the circus. "Actually," he explained to me, "it was a carnival, a mud show called the World of Mirth."

"What did you do?" I asked.

"Everything but the trapeze. I could eat fire, handle animals, walk a tightrope, swallow swords, and juggle just about anything."

It has been reported in the press that Sanders juggled watermelons. This seemed unlikely, and I asked Zoe about it. "That's just Alex exaggerating," she said. "You can't juggle watermelons."

Sanders seemed hurt when I confronted him with this apparent fabrication. "I never said I juggled watermelons. I juggled *a* watermelon. I juggled a watermelon, a string bean, and my shoe." After an appropriate pause for laughter, he added, somewhat disingenuously, "I don't know why people make so much of the circus thing. I only did that for a few months. Politics has been the real passion of my life."

Sanders was elected to the state legislature in 1966, at the age of twenty-eight. He entered public life just as the political landscape of South Carolina was shifting, from Democrat to Republican—Strom Thurmond switched parties in 1964—over the issue of civil rights. A group of talented young Democratic legislators—inevitably, they were called the Young Turks—began to gather at the statehouse in the late sixties. There were the Rileys, who were not related: Joseph Riley, who led the





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Reduced blinking from **BOTOX® COSMETIC** injection of the orbicularis muscle can lead to corneal exposure, persistent epithelial defect and corneal ulceration, especially in patients with VI nerve disorders. In the use of BOTOX for the treatment of blepharospasm, one case of corneal perforation in an aphakic eye requiring corneal grafting has occurred because of this effect. Careful testing of corneal sensation in eyes previously operated upon, avoidance of injection into the lower lid area to avoid ectropion, and vigorous treatment of any epithelial defect should be employed. This may require protective drops, ointment, therapeutic soft contact lenses, or closure of the eye by patching or other means.

Inducing paralysis in one or more extraocular muscles may produce spatial disorientation, double vision or past pointing. Covering the affected eye may alleviate these symptoms.

Caution should be used when **BOTOX® COSMETIC** treatment is used in patients who have an inflammatory skin problem at the injection site, marked facial asymmetry, ptosis, excessive dermatolysis, deep dermal scarring, thick sebaceous skin or the inability to substantially lessen glabellar lines by physically spreading them apart as these patients were excluded from the Phase 3 safety and efficacy trials.

Injection intervals of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** should be no more frequent than every three months and should be performed using the lowest effective dose (See Adverse Reactions, Immunogenicity).

#### Information for Patients:

Patients or caregivers should be advised to seek immediate medical attention if swallowing, speech or respiratory disorders arise.

#### Drug Interactions:

Co-administration of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** and aminoglycosides<sup>1</sup> or other agents interfering with neuromuscular transmission (e.g., curare-like nondepolarizing blockers, lincosamides, polymyxins, quindine, magnesium sulfate, anticholinesterases, succinylcholine chloride) should only be performed with caution as the effect of the toxin may be potentiated.

The effect of administering different botulinum neurotoxin serotypes at the same time or within several months of each other is unknown. Excessive neuromuscular weakness may be exacerbated by administration of another botulinum toxin prior to the resolution of the effects of a previously administered botulinum toxin.

#### Pregnancy: Pregnancy Category C

Administration of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** is not recommended during pregnancy. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** in pregnant women. When pregnant mice and rats were injected intramuscularly during the period of organogenesis, the developmental NOEL (No Observed Effect Level) of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** was 4 U/kg. Higher doses (8 or 16 U/kg) were associated with reductions in fetal body weights and/or delayed ossification.

In a range finding study in rabbits, daily injection of 0.125 U/kg/day (days 6 to 18 of gestation) and 2 U/kg (days 6 and 13 of gestation) produced severe maternal toxicity, abortions and/or fetal malformations. Higher doses resulted in death of the dams. The rabbit appears to be a very sensitive species to **BOTOX® COSMETIC**.

If the patient becomes pregnant after the administration of this drug, the patient should be apprised of the potential risks, including abortion or fetal malformations that have been observed in rabbits.

#### Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of fertility:

Long term studies in animals have not been performed to evaluate carcinogenic potential of **BOTOX® COSMETIC**.

The reproductive NOEL following intramuscular injection of 0, 4, 8, and 16 U/kg was 4 U/kg in male rats and 8 U/kg in female rats. Higher doses were associated with dose-dependent reductions in fertility in male rats (where limb weakness resulted in the inability to mate), and testicular atrophy or an altered estrous cycle in female rats. There were no adverse effects on the viability of the embryos.

#### Nursing mothers:

It is not known whether this drug is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, caution should be exercised when **BOTOX® COSMETIC** is administered to a nursing woman.

#### Pediatric use:

Use of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** is not recommended in children.

#### Geriatric use:

Clinical studies of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** did not include sufficient numbers of subjects aged 65 and over to determine statistically whether they respond differently from younger subjects. However, in the two identical phase 3 randomized 3:1, multi-center, double blind, placebo-controlled, parallel-group efficacy studies, the responder rates for both co-primary efficacy variables were higher for subjects ≤50 years of age compared to those subjects ≥65 years of age. Analysis based on a combined data set showed that, for the investigator's assessment endpoint of subjects aged 65 and over at Day 30, 39% (9/23) of subjects were responders compared to 22% (2/9) in the placebo group. This difference is neither statistically different ( $P = 0.228$ ) nor exceeds the pre-specified 30-percentage-point difference required by the definition of clinically significant. There were no statistically significant between-group differences for the investigator's assessment at maximum time for this age group. There was a statistically significant difference in favor of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** for the subject's global assessment at all time points ( $P = 0.036$ ) except Day 120 ( $P = 0.214$ ). (See Clinical Trials Section)

There were too few patients over the age of 75 to allow any meaningful comparisons. In general, dose selection for an elderly patient should be cautious, usually starting at the low end of the dosing range, reflecting the greater frequency of decreased cardiac function and of concomitant disease or other drug therapy.

### ADVERSE REACTIONS:

#### General:

The most serious adverse events reported for other indications studied include rare spontaneous reports of death, sometimes associated with dysphagia, pneumonia, and/or other significant debility, after treatment with botulinum toxin. There have also been rare reports of adverse events involving the cardiovascular system, including arrhythmia and myocardial infarction, some with fatal outcomes. Some of these patients had risk factors including pre-existing cardiovascular disease (See Warnings). The exact relationship of these events to the botulinum toxin injection has not been established. Additionally, a report of acute angle closure glaucoma one day after receiving an injection of botulinum toxin for blepharospasm was received, with recovery four months later after laser iridotomy and trabeculectomy. Focal facial paralysis, syncope and exacerbation of myasthenia gravis have also been reported after treatment of blepharospasm.

#### Glabellar Lines:

In clinical trials of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** the most frequently reported adverse events following injection of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** were headache, respiratory infection, flu syndrome, blepharoptosis and nausea.

Less frequently occurring (<3%) adverse reactions included pain in the face, erythema at the injection site and muscle weakness. While local weakness of the injected muscle(s) is representative of the expected pharmacological action of botulinum toxin, weakness of adjacent muscles may occur as a result of the spread of toxin. These events are thought to be associated with the injection and occurred within the first week. The events were generally transient but may last several months.

The data described in Table 1 reflect exposure to **BOTOX® COSMETIC** in 405 subjects aged 18 to 75 who were evaluated in the randomized, placebo-controlled clinical studies to assess the use of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** in the improvement of the appearance of glabellar lines (See clinical studies). Adverse events of any cause were reported for 43.7% of the **BOTOX® COSMETIC** treated subjects and 41.5% of the placebo treated subjects. The incidence of blepharoptosis was higher in the **BOTOX® COSMETIC** treated arm than in placebo (3.2% vs. 0%,  $p$ -value = 0.045). In the open-label, repeat injection study, blepharoptosis was reported for 2.1% (8/373) of subjects in the first treatment cycle and 1.2% (4/343) of subjects in the second treatment cycle. Adverse events of any type were reported for 49.1% (183/373) of subjects overall.

The most frequently reported of these adverse events in the open-label study included respiratory infection, headache, flu syndrome, blepharoptosis, pain and nausea.

Because clinical trials are conducted under widely varying conditions, adverse reaction rates observed in the clinical trials of a drug cannot be directly compared to rates in the clinical trials of another drug and may not be predictive of rates observed in practice.

**TABLE 1.**  
**Randomized Double Blind Studies:**  
**Rates of Adverse Events Reported by >2 or more Subjects in the BOTOX® Cosmetic Group, by Treatment Group.**

| Adverse Event (in order of decreasing frequency for BOTOX® Cosmetic) | BOTOX® Cosmetic (N=405) | Placebo (N=130) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Overall                                                              | 177 (43.7%)             | 54 (41.5%)      |
| Body as a Whole                                                      |                         |                 |
| Headache                                                             | 54 (13.3%)              | 23 (17.7%)      |
| Pain in Face                                                         | 9 (2.2%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Flu Syndrome                                                         | 8 (2.0%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Pain at Injection Site                                               | 7 (1.7%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Edema at Injection Site                                              | 6 (1.5%)                | 3 (2.3%)        |
| Pain in Back                                                         | 4 (1.0%)                | 3 (2.3%)        |
| Injury Accidental                                                    | 3 (0.7%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Respiratory System                                                   |                         |                 |
| Infection                                                            | 14 (3.5%)               | 5 (3.8%)        |
| Bronchitis                                                           | 6 (1.5%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Sinusitis                                                            | 6 (1.5%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Pharyngitis                                                          | 5 (1.2%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Dyspnea                                                              | 3 (0.7%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Infection Sinus                                                      | 3 (0.7%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Laryngitis                                                           | 3 (0.7%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Rhinitis                                                             | 3 (0.7%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Skin and Appendages                                                  |                         |                 |
| Erythema                                                             | 7 (1.7%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Skin Tightness                                                       | 4 (1.0%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Irritation Skin                                                      | 3 (0.7%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Digestive System                                                     |                         |                 |
| Nausea                                                               | 12 (3.0%)               | 3 (2.3%)        |
| Dyspepsia                                                            | 4 (1.0%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Tooth Disorder                                                       | 4 (1.0%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Liver Function Abnormal                                              | 3 (0.7%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Special Senses                                                       |                         |                 |
| Blepharoptosis                                                       | 13 (3.2%)               | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Nervous System                                                       |                         |                 |
| Dizziness                                                            | 5 (1.2%)                | 2 (1.5%)        |
| Paresthesia                                                          | 4 (1.0%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Anxiety                                                              | 3 (0.7%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Twitch                                                               | 3 (0.7%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Musculoskeletal System                                               |                         |                 |
| Muscle Weakness                                                      | 8 (2.0%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |
| Urogenital System                                                    |                         |                 |
| Infection Urinary Tract                                              | 4 (1.0%)                | 1 (0.8%)        |
| Hemic and Lymphatic System                                           |                         |                 |
| Echymosis                                                            | 7 (1.7%)                | 3 (2.3%)        |
| Cardiovascular                                                       |                         |                 |
| Hypertension                                                         | 4 (1.0%)                | 0 (0.0%)        |

In published literature of the use of botulinum toxin type A for facial lines, there has been a single reported incident of diplopia, which resolved completely in three weeks. Transient ptosis, the most frequently reported complication, has been reported in the literature in approximately 5% of patients.

#### Immunogenicity:

Treatment with **BOTOX® COSMETIC** for cosmetic purposes may result in the formation of antibodies that may reduce the effectiveness of subsequent treatments with **BOTOX® COSMETIC** for glabellar lines or **BOTOX®** for other indications. Formation of neutralizing antibodies to botulinum toxin type A may reduce the effectiveness of **BOTOX® COSMETIC** treatment of the appearance of glabellar lines and the effectiveness of **BOTOX®** in the treatment of other clinical indications such as cervical dystonia, blepharospasm and strabismus by inactivating the biological activity of the toxin. The rate of formation of neutralizing antibodies in patients receiving **BOTOX® COSMETIC** has not been well studied.

The critical factors for neutralizing antibody formation have not been well characterized. The results from some studies of the use of **BOTOX®** in the treatment of other clinical indications suggest that **BOTOX®** injections at more frequent intervals or at higher doses may lead to greater incidence of antibody formation. The potential for antibody formation may be minimized by injecting the lowest effective dose given at the longest feasible intervals between injections.

#### Passive Adverse Event Surveillance:

The following adverse reactions have been identified since the drug has been marketed: skin rash (including erythema multiforme, urticaria and psoriasisiform eruption), pruritus, and allergic reaction. Because these reactions are reported voluntarily from a population of uncertain size, it is not always possible to reliably estimate their frequency or establish a causal relationship to botulinum toxin.

Between January 1, 1990 and August 31, 2000, there have been 7 spontaneous reports of serious adverse events documented as being related to the reported cosmetic use of **BOTOX®**, including anaphylactic reaction, myasthenia gravis, decreased hearing, ear noise and localized numbness, blurred vision and retinal vein occlusion, glaucoma, and vertigo with nystagmus.

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revival of Charleston and became its seemingly eternal mayor; and Richard Riley, who served as governor and then as Secretary of Education under Bill Clinton. Sanders was a Young Turk, too: more flagrant than the others, perhaps, but always with a clear sense of where the borders of propriety lay—he remained one of the boys in the legislature, a favorite among his colleagues in both parties because of his entertainment value. His popularity with the statehouse crowd led to his appointment as chief judge of the Court of Appeals, in 1983, and to the presidency of the College of Charleston, in 1992.

In the beginning, however, Young Turkdom could be a fairly dangerous proposition. “All I, or any white person, had to do was counsel moderation or simple adherence to the law and you could expect something to happen immediately,” Sanders recalled. “Some fool would say, ‘Somebody ought to shoot that son of a bitch.’ And some other fool would act on it.”

In the mid-sixties, Sanders was the target of what he calls “a small assassination attempt.” He and Zoe were backing out of their driveway when a bullet was fired through their rear windshield and split the difference between them. There were other incidents. One occurred shortly after Sanders had given a speech condemning the defacing of a synagogue in Columbia. “We were having a dinner party one night and we heard what sounded like explosions in front of the house. It turned out to be nothing more than eggs hurled at our front windows, but it sounded terrifying and we all jumped under the table. As we were cowering there, there was more noise—shotgun blasts. I thought I was going to die, for sure. And I couldn’t find Zoe. Turns out she had gone to the closet, gotten her gun, and came out the front door firing. She actually levelled down on them. Whoever it was ran away.”



Sanders served in South Carolina’s House of Representatives for eight years, and in the State Senate for seven more. His day job during those years—the state legislature is not a full-time occupation—was as a trial lawyer. “That’s one thing in my life that I really miss,” Sanders told me. “I loved being a lawyer.”

As might be expected, Sanders did not shy away from the theatrical aspects of the bar; he loved performing for juries. Being a judge, even a chief judge, wasn’t as much fun, since the only performing allowed was the writing of opinions. “My father and I had a law practice in those days,” says Richard Riley, who returned to Greenville after eight years in the Clinton Cabinet. “I used to hear my father chuckling at his desk, and I knew it was because he was reading one of Alex’s opinions. He thought Alex hung the moon.”

Some of those opinions may hurt Sanders in the Senate campaign. The local radio talk shows—which were the sewer line for the vilest rumors about John McCain during the South Carolina primary campaign in 2000—are sure to note that Sanders once affirmed a lower-court decision to grant child custody to a lesbian mother. In another opinion, Sanders predicted a notorious position on the issue of oral sex:

The paucity of legal precedent on the issue of whether fellatio is adultery suggests that it is not one which society cries out to have resolved. Not for this reason, but because it is unnecessary for us to resolve the issue here, we decline to do so.

Sanders served on the Court of Appeals from 1983 to 1992—bored silly, according to Zoe—before assuming the presidency of the College of Charleston. “It was not a popular appointment on campus at first,” Bill Moore, a professor of political science at the college, said. “It was seen as a political appointment. Alex got the job because he was one of the good ol’ boys at the statehouse. But those connections helped get us some real financial support from the state legislature.”

At one point, Sanders decided to take on a fraternity that insisted on flying the Confederate battle flag. “He didn’t order them to take it down,” Franklin Ashley, a professor in the college’s theatre department, recalled. “He met with them

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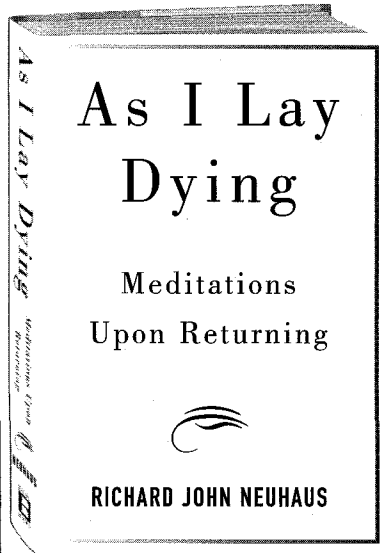
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quietly and said, 'Perhaps you should consider the impact that flag has on some of the people you admire'—and he named one person specifically—'who have to walk past it every day.' And they decided to take it down. That's Alex's way. He doesn't hector. He persuades. He charms."

Sanders had already announced that he would be retiring from the college in the fall of 2001 when state Democratic leaders, who were having trouble finding a Senate candidate, accepted his offer to run for the Strom Thurmond seat.

**L**indsey Graham is a more conventional politician than Alex Sanders, but he is not a cookie-cutter cliché. He was first elected to the House in 1994, a thirty-nine-year-old foot soldier in Newt Gingrich's Pyrrhic congressional revolution. He is probably best known as one of the vehement Republican "managers"—that is, prosecutors—in the impeachment of Bill Clinton. But Graham also supported John McCain for President over George W. Bush in 2000, a risky proposition in South Carolina, and he has assayed positions of McCainian moderation on campaign-finance reform and other issues. Like Sanders, Graham is by nature more a charmer than a screamer, which is a very good thing in South Carolina these days: local Republicans were shocked when twenty per cent of their stalwarts deserted the fold to vote for Jim Hodges, the Democrat who was elected governor in 1998 (and is running for reelection this year). The big issue was education, and most of the defectors were women. It has become difficult for Republicans to please both suburban soccer moms and up-country Christian Coalition members.

"Here's how I can lose," Graham told me when I met with him in early April at the annual banquet of Quail Unlimited, an appropriately genteel, environmentally sensitive hunting group. "I can lose if the Republican Party is divided, as it was in 1998, and also if I fail to attract independent voters. I consider myself a conservative reformer. I take traditional conservative positions on the Second Amendment, the right to life, and the Bush tax cut. But I also was a co-sponsor of H.R. 1, the Bush education bill, and I favor using federal money to put land

aside to preserve the environment. I took my position on campaign-finance reform because I couldn't have looked people in the eye if I'd gone along with the system as it stands. I supported McCain for President because he seemed to be the perfect anti-Clinton, a man who spoke his mind, regardless of the consequences. He was a sacrificial lamb, a victim of the financial mess that he wanted to clean up. But he made some mistakes, too: you've got to make sure you remain connected to your party's base. And that's an important part of my message this year, too: Which team do you want to be part of—Bush-Graham or Daschle-Sanders?"

South Carolina's political geography is a triple-layer cake. Graham comes from the western, up-country part of the state, which is wildly conservative. (Bob Jones University is in Greenville.) Sanders comes from the midlands, which is a bit more moderate. The third layer, the low country, is an eclectic mélange of African-Americans, Charleston eccentrics, Hilton Head businessmen, and stray rednecks, plus a dwindling but still politically powerful collection of Spanish-moss-draped Southern aristocracy. Lindsey Graham's positions certainly seem a more comfortable fit with the majority of South Carolinians, but the campaign may turn on an abstraction: who has the size and presence to replace Strom Thurmond in the Senate. "That is a big deal in this state," Graham told me. "The job just doesn't come up very often."

Sanders has the advantage of seeming more mature, substantial, and, well, unusual than Graham. Graham, however, is Thurmond's designated heir, and he has another advantage. "Alex is too old," an up-country Republican leader named Cordes Seabrook told me. "Lindsey's young enough to build up some seniority before he gets senile. We're sensitive about that. We've got two senile senators now," he joked, referring to both Thurmond, who is frailer than a papyrus scroll, and the Democrat Ernest (Fritz) Hollings, who remains spry but is eighty and a veteran of thirty-five years in the Congress.

It is far too early to make predictions about the race. But Lee Bandy, of the *State* newspaper, says that Sanders is doing better—in terms of fund-raising



and word of mouth—than he was expected to do. At the very least, local political sorts are anticipating some wonderful debates in the fall. Lindsey Graham is a former Air Force prosecutor, and Sanders is Sanders. “Alex is so smart and he’s so smooth,” Walter Edgar, who teaches history at the University of South Carolina, said. “He can stick a sword between your ribs and you won’t know you’ve been run through until you see the blood dripping on the floor.”

One of the truly odd things about Alex Sanders is that he is not as compelling on the stump as you might expect. He’s not a terrible speaker. He’s usually pretty funny; occasionally he can be inspirational. But there is a slightly constricted quality to his campaign appearances, which is probably attributable to the fact that he insists on writing out every speech, and then reading the text aloud. The effect is similar, one imagines, to watching Fred Astaire do the box step. “It is a matter of discipline,” Sanders told me. “When I write a speech, I look at each page and ask three questions: Does it contain irony? Does it have metaphor? And is it boring? Another, larger question is: Is it longer than Lincoln’s Second Inaugural? I’m nowhere near getting it short enough yet.”

One imagines that Sanders is also trying to find a way to please both his consultants and his personal aesthetic. The written text is the oratorical equivalent of Ashley Newton’s fund-raising stopwatch—without it, the Message Box might easily get lost in the arrant yarn-spinning. “Alex has never been a real politician,” Richard Riley says. “He has never had to cut to the quick and explain something in thirty seconds or less. That’s not his thing. But it’s something he’s probably going to have to master now.”

I watched Sanders deliver four or five speeches over the course of two months this spring; none of them were as much fun as just listening to him talk. The best was delivered downstate in late February, to the East Cooper Democrats, in a high-school cafeteria just across the river from Charleston—and it turned out to be the sort of evening that Alex Sanders would probably memorialize around the

cracker barrel for years to come, if he hadn’t been so intimately involved in it.

Sanders seemed more passionate than usual that night, talking about children raised in poverty, about one young woman who attended the College of Charleston on a scholarship but could not afford a meal plan and so she fasted three days a week. (He arranged a “cafeteria scholarship” for the girl, from some of the proceeds of a College of Charleston cookbook that Zoe had written.) After telling the story—very effectively, since it was not written out in his speech—he said, “Because I don’t always take myself so seriously, I sometimes give the impression that I’m not serious. That is a failing of mine.” He raised his voice then, almost to a shout. “But I want you to know: I am as serious as a heart attack. I am as serious as a cardiovascular infarction. I may strike out. But, if I do, I promise I’ll strike out swinging.” Finally, returning to the hungry college student, he added, “When we fail children like that, we fail America. . . . The brave men and women fighting the war in Afghanistan have a rule they follow, ‘We don’t leave our wounded behind.’ When we fail to follow that rule at home, we have forgotten why we are fighting the war. Our patriotism is a sham. . . . We can’t let America leave her wounded behind.”

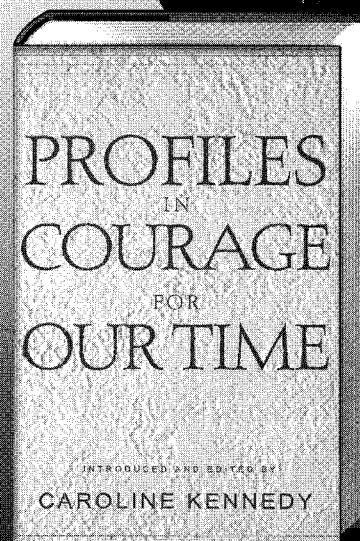
He received a standing ovation and was followed to the podium by the president of the East Cooper Democrats, a retired minister named Jim Young, who had just returned from a vacation in Spain. Young, an elderly white-haired man, was beside himself with pleasure. “What a splendid speech!” he said. “Alex Sanders reminds us of the moral and spiritual basis for our Party. He makes me so proud to be a Democrat.”

Those were the last words Jim Young ever spoke. He sat down in the front row and keeled over. Frantic efforts were made to revive him—Sanders was down on his hands and knees, offering to relieve the man who was attempting mouth-to-mouth resuscitation—but ultimately to no avail. Jim Young died three days later.

“Can you imagine that?” a stunned Alex Sanders said to me, after Young had been taken to the hospital. He handed me the text of his speech. “I don’t think I’ve experienced anything like that before.” ♦

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LETTER FROM COLOMBIA

## WAITING FOR WAR

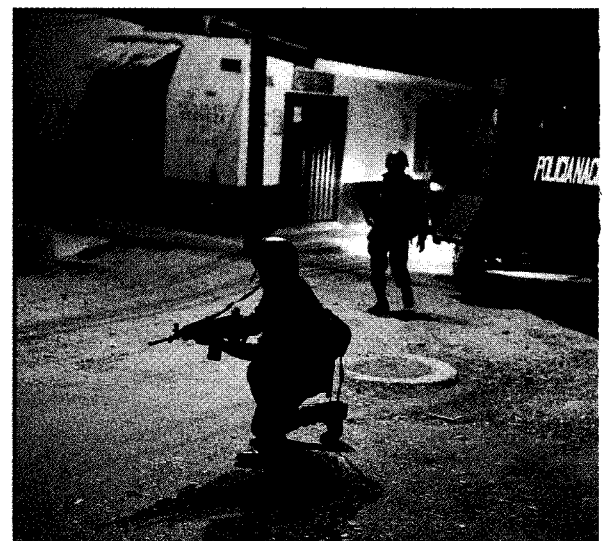
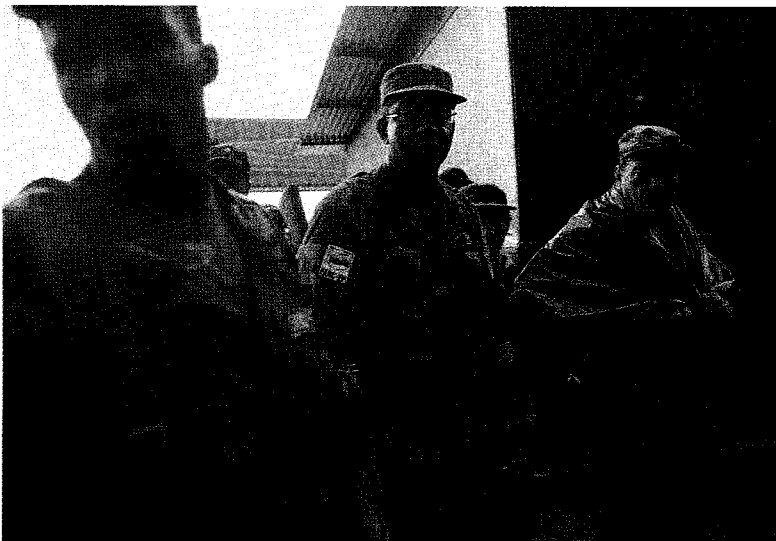
*Elections are a few weeks away, and the country is bracing for an explosion.*

BY ALMA GUILLERMOPRIETO

The power failure that knocked out the lights in the greater part of Colombia in March was not, it turned out, the result of a bomb. As officials explained to a skittish public two days later, it was the result of a hundred and seventy bombs, which had taken out as many power pylons since the beginning of the year, weakening the

Lying just across the Caribbean from Florida, Colombia has been troubled by political violence and civil wars for much of its two centuries of independence. In the last twenty years, that violence has been fuelled by exorbitant profits from the drug trade. Bombs, hijackings, and power outages have become a way of life, and if the next stage

question may be moot. The warriors—so many of them!—are already armed and waiting at the door. In addition to the Colombian government, with its sometimes less than efficient Army, and the government in Washington, which allotted \$1.3 billion two years ago to fight the drug trade, and is about to vote on thirty-five million dollars more to combat Colombian terrorism, there are warring outlaw groups on the right and the left that in recent years have grown huge on drug-trade profits: the two largest are the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (known as the A.U.C.), which calls itself patriotic and is paramilitary; and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, which calls itself socialist and



*The FARC guerrillas' leader, Manuel Marulanda (in a green rain sheet); police commandos on patrol; A.U.C. paramilitaries hunting for*

energy network enough so that the slightest dysfunction during peak hours would bring the entire system down. In a less hardy nation, one might have expected a panic, but this is Colombia. Little more was heard about unpredictable blackouts, and the same people who hours before had called friends and relatives to make sure they were all right (in the restaurant in Bogotá, the capital, where I was having dinner, the worry was palpable) were soon boasting that they had gone to bed early and slept deeply, or cracked jokes while they waited for the movie to start up again, or gone on dancing. The bravado was understandable. After all, it had been only a blackout, which meant that the war everyone is waiting for hadn't started.

is to be a full-fledged war, the United States, which already counts Colombia as its third-largest recipient of foreign aid, will be instrumental in financing it. The war may be inevitable, even if Álvaro Uribe Vélez, the hard-line Presidential candidate, who is running far ahead of his rivals, fails to win the elections later this month, even if the United States Congress fails to approve new disbursements of military aid, even if the guerrillas, who have survived for forty years, quickly disintegrate, Taliban-like, under the impact of a first air strike. There is much anxious debate about whether an outright war against the guerrillas is a good idea—whether, among other things, it represents any kind of solution to the country's long-term problems—but at this stage the

has been waging a guerrilla campaign along the outer edges of Colombia's tumultuous geography.

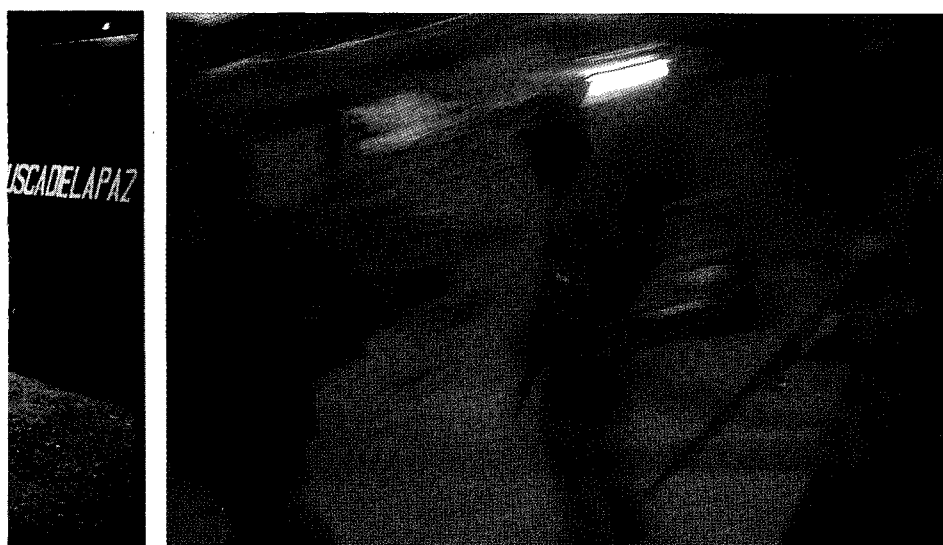
The FARC was once an orthodox guerrilla organization, but that was years ago. Its roots were in the nineteen-fifties, in a peasant movement that failed to get satisfaction from the government following the long years of bloodshed known as La Violencia. It was not a war or an uprising but a seemingly endless series of massacres perpetrated by land-starved campesinos from the Conservative Party against land-starved campesinos from the Liberal Party, and vice versa. While the peasants killed each other, the party bosses negotiated, in 1956, a power-sharing agreement that failed to make any provision for greater democracy or

LEFT AND RIGHT: STEPHEN FERRY/F.I.J.; CENTER: TEUN VOETEN/SIPA



social justice. In a remarkable speech two years ago, the guerrillas' aging leader, Manuel Marulanda (a pseudonym for Pedro Antonio Marín), recalled this era bitterly. He talked about the cows, pigs, and chickens he lost forty years ago when government troops invaded the land that he and a few other demobilized Liberal campesinos had precariously settled. (In Bogotá, the speech became a source of mirth among the rich.) After that long-ago government raid, Marulanda and a small band of followers took up arms again and, under the influence of a Communist Party organizer named Jacobo Arenas, they soon identified themselves as a revolutionary movement and became known as the FARC. Arenas, who died in 1990, was the chatty ideologue;

Farther south, the highland jungle flattens out and turns into the Amazonian river basin that Colombia shares with Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and Venezuela—a sea of jungle, as it were, and largely uncharted. It was here that desperate campesinos, chased away by La Violencia, or ruined by agribusiness, were gradually making their way. With astonishing speed, they cleared vast tracts of forest in order to grow coca, the world's most profitable crop. Poor campesinos had traditionally constituted the FARC's social base and recruitment pool, but now they faced a conflict of loyalty; their coca harvest was being bought up directly by great benefactors, powerful and splendid men who were already making their mark on Colom-



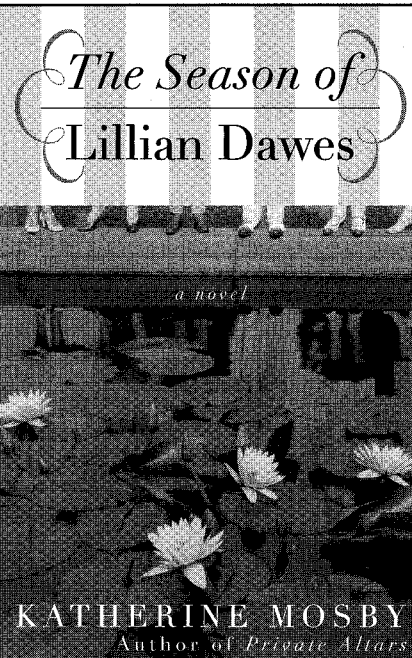
Guerrillas on the streets of Medellín. The FARC and the A.U.C. are both funded with drug money.

the parsimonious, slow-moving Marulanda was the fighter. By staging kidnappings and sabotage operations, their group survived in hiding for more than twenty years, growing slowly, until Colombia was swept into the vortex created by United States consumers' ravenous demand for illegal drugs.

I met Arenas and Marulanda in 1986, after trekking for five strenuous days across a frozen Andean páramo and then down from that height—some three thousand metres—into a highland jungle where the FARC had set up its central headquarters, in a camp camouflaged among giant tree ferns and stands of yarumo. The journey seemed like an expedition to another continent, but that wrinkled mountain territory was actually just a hundred miles or so from Bogotá.

bia's economy, social order, and politics. The guerrillas could have taken a stand against these glittering members of a drug cartel that was corrupting the nation, but even then the FARC was not governed by unreasonable idealism. In his snug log cabin in the highland jungle, Arenas explained the guerrillas' official line to me, which is, generally, that although his organization could not approve of drug trafficking, it also could not deny poor peasants the right to improve their lot. As a compromise, the FARC allowed the traffickers into their control zone in the jungle, and taxed them a reasonable portion of their unreasonable profit. Current estimates of how much the FARC takes in every year from its cut run from three hundred to five hundred million dollars. These fig-

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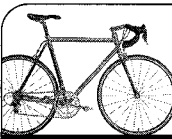
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ures include the take from what is now the FARC's direct involvement in the manufacture of both cocaine and heroin.

Thanks to that bonanza, the FARC evolved into a fighting force of some eighteen thousand guerrillas, and by 1998 they were taking over government barracks and burning down police stations. They attacked public buildings with homemade mortars, wrought havoc with highway traffic throughout the country, and took five hundred soldiers and policemen hostage. That year, the Conservative Party candidate Andrés Pastrana was elected President, and he immediately sued for peace. Pastrana began by granting the FARC an area of land twice the size of El Salvador—essentially, he legalized the FARC's control of the coca-growing area that it has commanded for years—in exchange for an agreement to sit down at the negotiating table.

The FARC leaders, who had been known for so long only as faceless pseudonyms hiding in the jungle, suddenly went public, smiling for the nightly news, issuing declarations, and making little jokes. You no longer had to climb mountains to see them—now anyone could board a plane in Bogotá, land an hour later in the devastatingly hot jungle town of San Vicente del Caguán, and watch guerrilla girls and boys whizzing around on motorbikes and patrolling the streets in lieu of the local police. With any luck, a visitor might even glimpse Manuel Marulanda himself, riding into town in his S.U.V., surrounded by escorts, or run into El Mono Jojoy (roughly, "Blondie Hey-ho"), the FARC's fiftyish military commander, driving *his* S.U.V., followed by five more spanking-new vehicles in which his bodyguards travelled. In San Vicente, El Mono Jojoy, whose real name is Jorge Briceño, was not much for press interviews, but the briefest encounter with him could be revealing. When the taxi in which I was riding with two local journalists encountered his caravan, on a dusty country road on the outskirts of town, he stopped to make way for us. We got out to say hello, and El Mono, a big ruddy man with lank hair, bantered with my colleagues, addressing them each as Comandante. There was a sturdy, sexy blond woman—the daughter of a local rancher, I later found out—in the passenger seat beside him, and a bottle of Passport Scotch

wedged into the beverage holder. "And you?" he said, turning to me. "What do they call you? Comandante Bossy?"

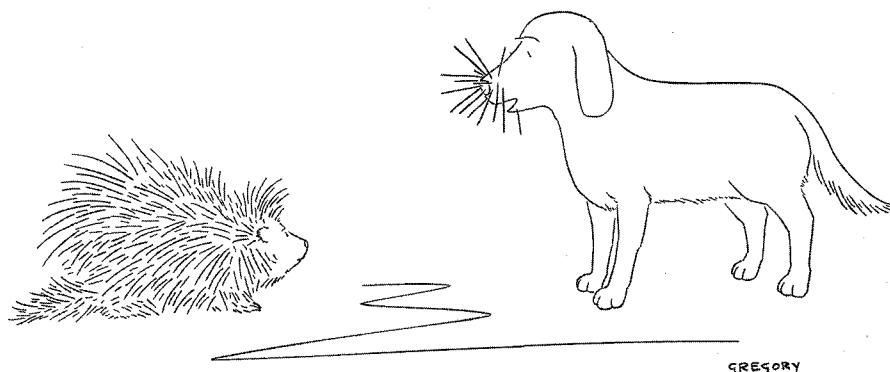
I asked him about an announcement that a FARC spokesman had read to us minutes earlier—that a twenty-day holiday ceasefire would not be renewed. "I don't know anything about that," he answered. "Whatever the communiqué says. I've got to go shoot some bullets."

In a country sick to its very heart of violence, the lopsided peace plan was greeted with generous enthusiasm. The only offended parties appear to have been the Army, which was ordered to withdraw from a significant part of the national territory and turn it over to the enemy, and the pistol-happy right-wing paramilitaries of the A.U.C.

In the broad territory that stretches between the Caribbean Sea and the Magdalena River—Colombia's Mississippi—a traveller must often negotiate at least three different kinds of checkpoints, some belonging to the guerrillas, some to the Army, and some to the A.U.C. More unnerving still, there is no easy way to tell which group is guarding the barricades. They all wear military uniforms and carry impressive automatic weapons. The guerrillas are likely to be teenage girls and boys. The Army soldiers are inclined to be listless. The A.U.C.'s forces are slightly spiffier and better armed than the others, and even though the organization is less than a decade old, there are already about eight thousand of them. Not even their founder, Fidel Castaño, could have predicted such glory when he first set out to avenge his father's death, some twenty years ago.

In the early nineteen-eighties, Castaño, a onetime cardsharp and drug trafficker, arrived in Córdoba from the neighboring state of Antioquia and bought up entire fiefdoms of cattle land. Shortly after, he embarked on a campaign of massacring civilians suspected of supporting the FARC and other guerrilla groups. Whole families of campesinos were eliminated in this fashion over the next few years, and one consequence is that the FARC no longer ventures into much of Córdoba, and certainly not into the region's capital, Montería. The sentiment I heard over and over again, repeated by the wealthier people of the city, was "the paramilitaries may not





*"On the plus side, you've cured my back pain."*

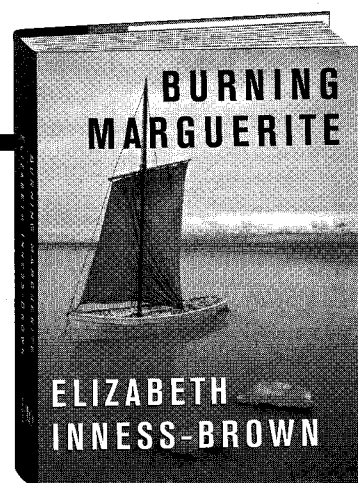
be the best solution, but at least we can work again." And because, as a result of the rich people's renewed prosperity, there are jobs once again for the poor people of Córdoba, and because the guerrillas were unable to defend those people against the paramilitaries when the bloodshed started, large numbers of the paras' recruits are actually guerrilla defectors. Fidel Castaño died in a skirmish with guerrillas in 1994, but he is still idolized, both in the slums and among the élite. His mantle has been taken up by his younger brother, Carlos.

The military stronghold of the A.U.C. lies in the mountains of Córdoba, but its heart is in Montería. The city is on the same Caribbean inland stretch of farmland as the sweltering town where Gabriel García Márquez was born. In Montería's oldest surviving house, with a ticking grandfather clock and mahogany rocking chairs, a dirt-floor patio, and guava and avocado trees, it is possible to recall "One Hundred Years of Solitude," page by page. Outside the house's stucco walls, however, Montería is a roaring motorcycle town, full of pizza parlors and stores selling plastic platform shoes; Macondo in the unfortunate twenty-first century. This is where anger against the long rule of the FARC has turned into fanatical support for the paramilitaries.

I had lunch during Easter week this spring with Montería's leading intellectual, Rodrigo García, whose house everyone in town can identify. García is neither a cattle rancher nor a wealthy man, but he is admired because, years before Fidel Castaño acquired nation-

wide fame, García articulated the wealthy cattle ranchers' support for the murderous paramilitary group that Castaño founded. Don Rodrigo, a seventy-six-year-old gentleman with old-fashioned provincial manners, welcomed me into his family as if I were an old friend, gave me a generous lunch, and explained the source of Montería's devotion to the Castaño brothers. "The guerrillas claimed this land as their domain in the nineteen-eighties," he said. "And the señores in the big cities told themselves that as long as the guerrillas kept murdering and kidnapping and intimidating the cattle ranchers around here, they could sleep easy. There were two hundred kidnappings in a single year. You found corpses in the streets . . . and the state didn't do a thing! I had to personally go out to raise money among the ranchers so the police could have gasoline. The public forces were inept and penniless. Soldiers used to go out on campaigns wearing their predecessors' boots. We shouted at the government every day, with no results, and the only one who demonstrated a tremendous efficiency in this situation was Fidel Castaño."

Don Rodrigo claims that he has been the younger Castaño's mentor since Fidel died, and Carlos Castaño describes him effusively as "a second father." The old man probably knows more than anyone about the brothers' remarkable saga. "It's true that Fidel started out as a card-sharp—a very good one," García acknowledged toward the end of our meal. "But just look at what he did! He carried out a land reform all by himself"—distributing one of the many enormous



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cattle ranches he owned in Córdoba among the campesinos there—"and then he lived in Paris. As a great art dealer!"

Carlos Castaño, now in his mid-thirties, published an autobiography last December, entitled "Mi Confesión." It has been a runaway best-seller; pirated editions of it are hawked in downtown Bogotá alongside pirated editions of "Harry Potter." And although Castaño does not acknowledge the A.U.C.'s participation in any wholesale massacres, the book describes some questionable aspects of the author's life, including several murders, and gives a frank portrayal of his brother.

Castaño relates how in 1980 the FARC kidnapped his father in the mining town of Segovia and shot him when the family couldn't come up with the ransom money; how Fidel Castaño vowed revenge; how he made a small fortune by holding up diamond convoys in Brazil and smuggling the booty into Colombia; and how he then set up the first of a series of bands that vowed to fight the guerrillas to the death.

Like Don Rodrigo, Carlos refers proudly to Fidel's stint as an art connoisseur. Of course, it's not impossible that his astonishing older brother acquired an overnight expertise in the Old Masters, but it seems more likely that in France Fidel Castaño found a convenient way to launder a narcofortune—whether it belonged to him or to his

associates in the paramilitaries is a matter of dispute.

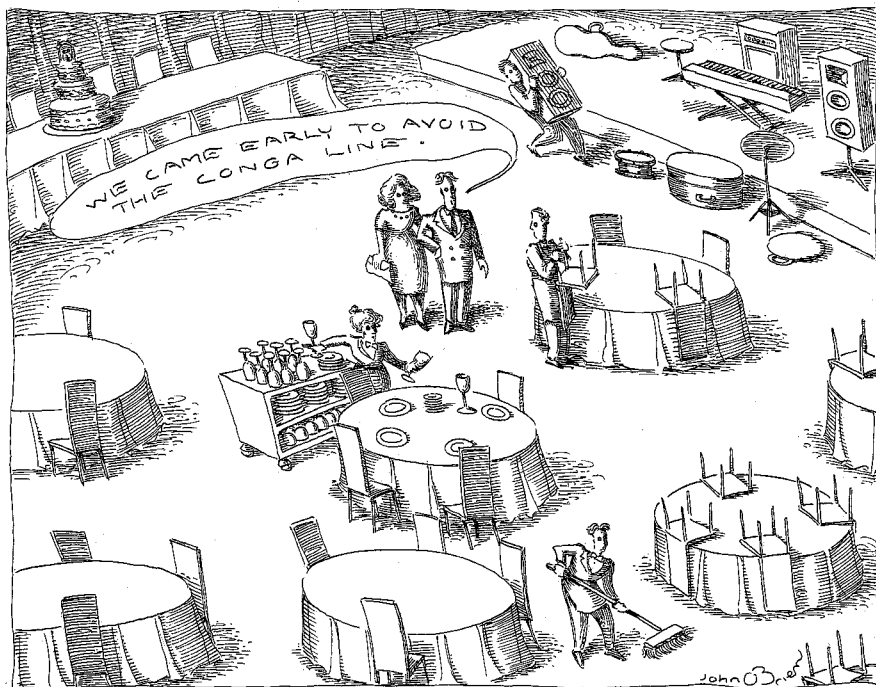
Carlos Castaño has shown greater efficiency and political savvy than his brother since he took over, eight years ago, and consolidated the various paramilitary groups into a nationwide army under the A.U.C. banner. During Fidel's tenure, some two thousand civilians died in paramilitary massacres. Under Carlos, there have been more than two thousand civilian victims in a single year. Carlos has been accused of organizing and participating in atrocious events, at which the throats of men, women, and children were slit while their executioners drank and danced, but you would never guess that from the A.U.C.'s various jazzy Web sites. Here visitors can play video games in which they shoot guerrillas, or peruse favorable, and even critical, articles in the world press. The Web sites are the result of a determined effort by Castaño to reposition himself as a respectable participant in Colombian politics. (Following the events of September 11th, Castaño promised to hold off on further civilian massacres, and he appears to have kept his word.) The A.U.C. is financed not only by cattle ranchers' generous contributions but also by the heroin and cocaine manufactured in plantations under its control. "If I didn't do this, I would turn into an idealist comandante who lost the war," Castaño writes. "It's sad to know that

sometimes the need for money has led me to allow myself to be suborned by the 'narcos.'"

This last point is what makes the Colombian senator Antonio Navarro Wolff, a canny observer of the clandestine scene, certain that the conflict cannot end soon. Navarro is a former guerrilla himself, and I talked to him in March, shortly after he was reelected on an independent ticket with the second-largest vote in the nationwide congressional elections. The May Presidential elections now hove into view, with the upstart Álvaro Uribe Vélez occupying the foreground, but for the moment I was more interested in Navarro's reading of the events of February, when the peace talks and the control zone came to an end.

It was then that President Pastrana finally acknowledged that peace with the FARC would not occur during his Administration. (He is due to leave office in August.) For three years, the government had done its best to ignore mounting evidence that the FARC was using the control zone to recruit and train adolescents as fighters, and to supervise the cultivation and processing of cocaine and heroin in areas that could no longer really be called small plots; they had become plantations. Defiant acts allegedly by the FARC, like the murder of a politician and his mother, were also ignored, but on the morning of February 20th a guerrilla commando unit—two men and two women—hijacked a small commercial plane and forced it to land on a road near the control zone. After searching the passengers, the guerrillas drove off in a waiting vehicle with their prize: a senator who serves on the peace commission. "No more!" Pastrana said during a national broadcast that afternoon, and he ordered the Army to retake the zone and pursue the guerrillas there and throughout the country. That was why those of us who saw the lights go out in Colombia a month later wondered if the guerrillas' revenge had begun, and why I wanted to ask a former guerrilla how he thought the war would proceed.

Navarro is a skinny, sharp-faced man with a native cheer that has not been diminished by the many vicissitudes of his life, including a grenade attack that nearly killed him. "Before the control zone started, the FARC had mobile-strike ca-





pabilities," Navarro said, referring to the guerrillas' leap from small-time ambushes to attacks on Army troops by high-powered units. "But now the government Army has changed." Most analysts squirm when they have to address the issue of United States military assistance and its benefits, and Navarro touched on it gingerly. "Thanks to United States assistance, the Army has more helicopters and airplanes, and that gives it great mobility and air power. The guerrillas took a step or two backward when they provoked the collapse of the peace talks, but I'm not sure they've realized it yet." The FARC, he said, has a great many new recruits who have known only the relative peace of the past three years, and who are mostly very young (the official recruiting age is fifteen). "But now they're going to have to go back to small-unit sabotage operations," he added, "which means that they're going to have serious middle-management problems. And, of course, it will be easier for the paramilitaries to hunt them down in such small groups."

Already, the difficulties facing the FARC are clear. The group's large, comfortable headquarters came under aerial bombardment. Their communications are a mess. They were getting plump, and now they are on the run again. One problem of unknown significance is the fate of Manuel Marulanda, who by all accounts remains, at seventy-two, the organization's active leader. He is said to have left the control zone in the tense weeks before the talks broke off, and to be in safe hiding in Venezuela. (During its brief tenure, the FARC built a large network of paths and roads through the Amazon region, and he may well have been driven most of the way there.) If he is indeed in Venezuela, it is with at least the tacit consent of President Hugo Chávez, whose government is said to be friendly with the FARC. At this point, however, the stability of Chávez's regime is questionable, and the guerrillas have few other international safe havens. At the request of President Pastrana, Mexico has just shut down the FARC's long-standing international representation there. With many of the wildlands' new roads and tracks now under surveillance, Marulanda's future is complicated: he is hale, but he is old, and trucking him up the Andes and down the Amazon may not be possible much longer.

I asked Navarro how he thought the FARC's confrontation with the paramilitaries would proceed. "Differently than with the government," he said. "The government will have to defend its infrastructure against guerrilla attacks. But with the paras it's going to be a battle for territory—for the land where both the FARC and the paras grow illegal crops. Whoever wins control over these areas gains two objectives: they get money for themselves, and they take money away from the enemy. And that's going to be a battle that will be fought with no rules, in the purest paramilitary style."

The great risk, and perhaps the greatest likelihood, Navarro added, is that when the bloodshed is over the country will end up being controlled more or less in the same way it has been for years: by the Army in the cities, the paramilitaries in the mid-sized population centers, and the guerrillas in the countryside.

Unless the sky falls, Álvaro Uribe Vélez, who has jumped twenty points ahead of his nearest rival, the old-fashioned Liberal Party politician Horacio Serpa, will be the people's choice for President on May 26th—and the choice of Carlos Castaño and his paramilitaries as well.

Uribe is a slight, boyish forty-nine-year-old, who looks like what he once was: an honors student with a doctorate in law and political science and some business-management courses at the Harvard University Extension School. Colombian investigative reporters have spent quite a lot of time looking for evidence of links to the Medellín drug cartel or to Castaño's right-wing groups, but nothing has ever turned up, and Uribe has become adept at parrying the attacks against him. He has explained repeatedly that although his father and the father of the narco-trafficking Ochoa brothers were friends, it was a friendship based on their shared passion for show horses. A charge he is proud of is that, between 1995 and 1998, when he was governor of the prosperous and tortured state of Antioquia, whose capital is Medellín, he oversaw the creation of a network of civilian patrol groups. At least two of these groups evolved into notorious death squads, but Uribe insists that the others were merely efficient neighborhood peacekeepers. When reporters ask what

he thinks of the fact that right-wing subversive groups in Colombia have all but openly declared their support for him, he answers that he has never met with the paramilitaries and that his government will combat *los violentos* of the right and the left without distinction.

Uribe is so unlikely to lose that some of his enemies are trying to get him killed instead: a bomb made his armored car jump last month, but the armor held. When I interviewed him in Bogotá, Uribe told me that he had been the object of several attempts on his life, and after long weeks on the dangerous campaign trail his narrow, delicate face was looking drawn. He took off his glasses, rubbed his eyes, and yawned repeatedly as I plied my questions, but when he answered he never once lost his guarded, focussed intensity.

Uribe's father, like the father of Fidel and Carlos Castaño, and the fathers and close relatives of so many paramilitary leaders, had been murdered—in his case, during a kidnapping attempt by the FARC—and, with this in mind, I asked him what he thought about the prospects for national reconciliation. As always, Uribe avoided talking about painful personal matters.

"After so much violence, we have to exercise authority firmly but with transparency, in order to open the way to reconciliation," he said. "Because what we've had here is a false kind of civility, which consists in thinking that the exercise of authority is opposed to civility."

Uribe, a lifelong Liberal Party member now running as an independent, was first championed by Conservatives; he speaks disapprovingly of former President Belisario Betancur, a charming maverick Conservative who attempted to negotiate with the guerrillas but caused only disaster and bloodshed. Uribe prefers the approach of Betancur's predecessor, the Liberal Julio César Turbay, who unleashed the military on the guerrillas, and whose regime was denounced by Americas Watch and Amnesty International for multiple human-rights violations. When I asked Uribe about this preference, he said that he would have done things somewhat differently, but that he would not have abandoned Turbay's approach. "Today, things are clear," he added. "When a government is generous with violent groups,



these groups don't respond generously but with increased aggression. They've learned Machiavelli's lesson well, which is that if a government is generous toward you, you should take that as a sign of weakness."

With the exception of the civilian patrol groups that turned into death squads, and a military campaign against the guerrillas in the Urabá region of Antioquia, which is often described as brutal, Uribe's record as governor of Antioquia is outstanding, particularly in this chaotic nation. Public health, education, and highway systems, which are among Colombia's worst problems, improved greatly in Antioquia during his tenure. "I found an Urabá in flames," he told me. "But by 1997 there was less bloodshed and we had an Urabá with peace."

And with paramilitaries? I asked.

Uribe searched for the right words. "It's a source of shame for democracy to have to admit that in Colombia, owing to the weakness of the state, some regions that have relative peace also have a large paramilitary presence."

Two years ago, the United States Congress authorized President Clinton's request for \$1.3 billion in aid to Colombia. The funds were earmarked for the drug war as part of an ambitious program called Plan Colombia. The money has been spent overwhelmingly on hardware, helicopters, and reconnaissance planes, but under the terms of the appropriation this equipment is to be used only to assist the Colombian armed forces and police in eradicating the drug trade. Last year, however, the Bush Administration paved the way for further military aid by adding the A.U.C. to the FARC on its list of terrorist organizations, and Congress is now considering the request for thirty-five million dollars more in assistance to combat terrorism. I asked Uribe what kind of help he would request from the United States if he is elected.

"Maintain and improve Plan Colombia," he said. "On the military side, we need greater air-interception capability. Twenty planes loaded with drugs still take off from here every day. We need more efficient social programs within the plan—for example, a pilot project for the fifty thousand coca- and poppy-growing campesino families that would guarantee them twenty-five hundred dollars a year. And we need to be able to use Plan

## SCHOOL LETTING OUT

(Fourth or Fifth Grade)

The afternoons of going home from school  
Past the young fruit trees and the winter flowers,  
The schoolyard cries fading behind you then,  
And small boys running to catch up, as though  
It were an honor somehow to be near—  
And all forgiven now, even the dog  
Who, straining at his tether, starts to bark,  
Not from anger but some secret joy.

—Donald Justice

Colombia to avoid terrorism, avoid kidnappings, massacres, and the migration of communities uprooted by violence."

In the current atmosphere, in which even Uribe's most vocal opponents sound mealy-mouthed when discussing the imminence of war, Uribe, neither a humorous nor a playful man, comes off as an optimist. He is convinced that the FARC is not ready to face an energetic, coordinated assault involving airpower, civil-defense units, and thoroughgoing reform of the state. He could well be right, but his definition of war is narrower than most. For him, it seems, the FARC and its estimated eighteen thousand young men and women in arms and the thousands of enraged campesino families who back them do not appear to represent a legitimate enemy, and this has implications for the way they might be confronted.

"There isn't a war," he said sharply when I used the term. Then, after a pause, "What we have here is not a confrontation between two opposing sides. We have a people tormented by *los violentos*. There will be authority to protect the people, and when the people see that this authority is transparent they will join us."

Won't there be terrible violence? I asked.

"On the contrary, on the contrary," he insisted. "The more the Army acts, the more it acts as a dissuasive force. My obsession is authority with dissuasion."

Later, I talked to a Colombian friend who was once involved in leftist politics, and who, like so many of her generation, now refuses to read the papers, concentrating instead on artistic matters

and her career. "One of my friends called me the other day and confessed that she was going to vote for Uribe," she said with a short laugh. "I didn't tell her that I am, too, because I don't want her spreading the word around." Like so many others, my friend had shopped for a choice among the six main candidates remaining in the field. Only Uribe offered the promise of forceful action—perhaps less in his specific campaign proposals than in his repeated use of the word "authority"—and so she was planning to vote not only behind her friends' backs but behind her own, as it were.

Among the painful issues my friend is working hard to ignore is that Uribe's all but guaranteed triumph will hardly be a victory for democracy, no matter how wide his margin of victory or how secret the ballot. This is because Carlos Castaño and his paras are not taking any chances. According to a detailed article in the national newspaper *El Tiempo*, the paras are threatening to take reprisals against entire communities if Uribe fails to carry them.

Castaño's A.U.C. has excellent intelligence in the cities, and it is widely assumed that part of his network is found among the drivers of the little yellow cabs that zip around every urban center, large or small. (In some cities, these networks were inherited directly from the narco-traffickers.) The man who picked me up on the Séptima—Bogotá's main thoroughfare—appeared to fit the description of an urban para precisely. He was burly and wore dark glasses that seemed to have been soldered to his scowling forehead. Unnervingly, he knew the address I had given him: the house where I



was going, he pointed out correctly, was a government agency for boys and girls under the age of eighteen. The agency is small and virtually unknown even among the press in Bogotá, partly because its administrators prefer it that way. The forty or so youths who gather there every day are recent defectors from the FARC and other guerrilla groups, and they are the focus of a certain amount of hostility among their neighbors. The taxi-driver knew about the teen-age deserters, though, and he appeared to lump them together with lawless youths at large and the motorcyclists and pedestrians he seemed intent on running down. "Scoundrels—all of them," he raged as we approached the defectors' house. "Now that Uribe is going to get elected, they'll see what's what. They're all trash, a plague, and the only way to get rid of them is by eliminating them, and the way you eliminate them is with a bullet to the forehead. Don't you agree?"

I ended up spending a lot of time at the defectors' house, listening to their stories: "A guerrilla group shot my uncle because he belonged to the FARC," one boy told me. "I didn't get past seventh grade because my uncle was the one who was paying for me to study. I joined the guerrillas because I like to fight. I like weapons. I left after a few years because one of the girls I slept with in my patrol area asked, 'What meaning do you see in all this?' and I thought about it and I decided she was right, and I deserted two days later."

By and large, the boys and girls at the center were from the backcountry. They had been in combat and had shot soldiers, but their outlook was different from that of the mad young killers who brought the drug-trafficking city of Medellín a certain fame back in the nineties. Duty, and not anarchy, played a dominant role in their lives. There was Jorge, for example, who had ears like trumpets and mud-green eyes, and looked famished. He was only now practicing his reading skills, he told me, because from the time he was old enough to carry a load he'd been working too hard in the fields to have time for school. An only child of an abandoned mother who then abandoned him as well—to his grandmother, who put him to work—he discovered in his teens that he had a half brother. The two quickly became close, but then some men who were

looking to shoot someone who was supposed to be wearing a red shirt killed his brother, who was wearing a red shirt, too. "And then I killed the one who killed him," Jorge said. "And then I had to run away to the mountains." Where he comes from, he explained, there are rules of conduct. He was sixteen.

For a couple of years, according to Jorge, he was basically satisfied with life. "Up there, they give you three meals a day," he said. And the guerrillas told him about how they all had to fight to change the country, so that the narcos would disappear, and theft and kidnappings would be a thing of the past, and he agreed with that and felt useful. But he had fallen madly in love with a young guerrilla (the FARC estimates that thirty per cent of its fighting force consists of young women), and, he said, "she began having a lot of problems with her kidneys." I told him I didn't see the connection between this fact and his desertion, but to him it was obvious. "Up there, if you're useless they kill you," he said. He realized that his girlfriend might be in trouble when his commander announced that Jorge was being transferred to the Amazon region but the girl would have to stay behind. He plotted their escape immediately, and she is at the center with him now, with their baby, while he struggles with the city and the alphabet.

The kids at the house have a lot of time to think back fondly on their guerrilla days. "It was a good life," a boy named Luis said, forgetting what he'd told me earlier—that his pregnant girlfriend had been shot beside him by the police, that the guerrillas' disregard for the common people upset him, that he'd been set to carrying heavy loads for miles despite a bad knee, because his unit commander had it in for him. At least back in the mountains he had a role to play.

"I joined the guerrillas because my family has been in this forever, ever since the days of La Violencia," he said finally, in answer to my insistent questions about how he made his choices. "And we're always divided: some of the brothers go into the military, and the other brothers, or the cousins, join the guerrillas. That's just the way it is." It is a stupid cycle of violence, but for years Colombians on all sides seem to have been willing to think that it is fate, and in the immediate future that may well be the case. ♦

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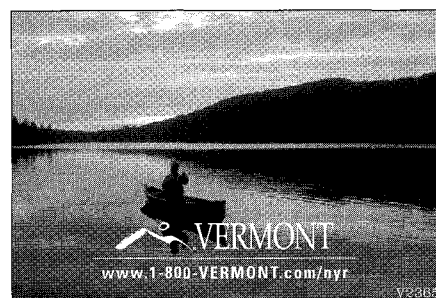
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# PUBLIC NUISANCE

*Larry Kramer, the man who warned America about AIDS, can't stop fighting hard—and loudly.*

BY MICHAEL SPECTER

A long and vituperative essay appeared on the front page of the March 14, 1983, issue of a weekly newspaper called the *New York Native*. The *Native* was the city's only significant gay publication at the time, and anything printed there was guaranteed to attract attention. This piece did considerably more than that. Entitled "1,112 and Counting," it was a five-thousand-word screed that accused nearly everyone connected with health care in America—officials at the Centers for Disease Control, in Atlanta, researchers at the National Institutes of Health, in Washington, doctors at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, in Manhattan, and local politicians (particularly Mayor Ed Koch)—of refusing to acknowledge the implications of the nascent AIDS epidemic. The article's harshest condemnation was directed at those gay men who seemed to think that if they ignored the new disease it would simply go away.

"If this article doesn't scare the shit out of you, we're in real trouble," its author, Larry Kramer, began. "If this article doesn't rouse you to anger, fury, rage and action, gay men have no future on this earth. Our continued existence depends on just how angry you can get. . . . Unless we fight for our lives we shall die." The piece became perhaps the most widely reprinted article ever published in a gay newspaper. "I am sick of closeted gay doctors who won't come out to help us fight. . . . I am sick of gay men who won't support gay charities. Go give your bucks to straight charities, fellows, while we die." He went on, "Every gay man who is unable to come forward now and fight to save his own life is truly helping to kill the rest of us."

Kramer was also sick of the way he was treated within New York's gay community. For years, the Greenwich Village and Fire Island swells had consid-

ered him a nebbishy interloper—a puritan who often wondered in print why gay life had to be defined by sexual promiscuity rather than by fidelity or love. His views were routinely rejected. Gay men had battled hard for sexual freedom, and for many of them the unfettered pursuit of sex was exactly what that freedom was all about; they certainly didn't want to be told what to do with their bodies by a homosexual who seemed chronically unable to enjoy himself. In 1980, not long after Kramer's novel "Faggots" was published, the playwright Robert Chesley wrote, "Read anything by Kramer closely, and I think you'll find the subtext is always: the wages of gay sin are death." That was indeed a central theme of "Faggots," which appeared three years before AIDS, and which lampooned the sexual adventures of upper-middle-class gay New York. "Faggots" turned Kramer into a pariah. The book was removed from the shelves of New York's only gay bookstore, and he even found himself banned from the grocery near his vacation home on Fire Island. "I became a hermit for three years after that book was published," Kramer told me not long ago, still surprised by the condemnation he received from people he thought he was going to impress. "The straight world thought I was repulsive, and the gay world treated me like a traitor. People would literally turn their back when I walked by. You know what my *real* crime was? I put the truth in writing. That's what I do: I have told the fucking truth to everyone I have ever met."

That is one way to put it. Rodger McFarlane, a former lover, and a comrade in the AIDS wars from the beginning of the epidemic, suggested another: "When it comes to being an asshole, Larry is a virtuoso with no peer. Nobody can alienate people quicker, better, or more completely." "Faggots" has been at-

tacked as coarse, prudish, and polemical, but it has sold something like a million copies, which places it high among the best-selling works of gay fiction. "Faggots" has never been out of print. By the end of the book, Kramer had all but predicted the AIDS epidemic, just a few years before it would ruin his world.

At the time, people were too busy enjoying themselves to care. The late seventies and early eighties were a sexual Weimar in New York City. Cocaine and poppers were plentiful and excess was expected—particularly in the West Village. There was also an endless stream of activity in the bathhouses and along the rotting piers from Christopher Street to Chelsea, where gay men congregated by the score for the kind of obsessive and anonymous sex that Kramer warned could someday kill them. "How many of us have to die before *you* get scared off your ass and into action?" Kramer wrote in the *Native* piece. "Aren't 195 dead New Yorkers enough?" In his first article on the subject, published two years earlier and less widely read, Kramer noted, "If I had written this a month ago, I would have used the figure '40.' If I had written this last week I would have needed '80.' Today I must tell you that 120 gay men in the United States . . . are suffering from an often lethal form of cancer called Kaposi's sarcoma or from a virulent form of pneumonia that may be associated with it. More than thirty have died."

Twenty years later, with AIDS established as the worst epidemic in human history, with no cure, with as many as fifty million infected, and with people dying every day throughout the world in numbers that cannot easily be absorbed, Kramer's distant cries seem almost meek. Yet the fear that he unleashed helped transform gay life; men

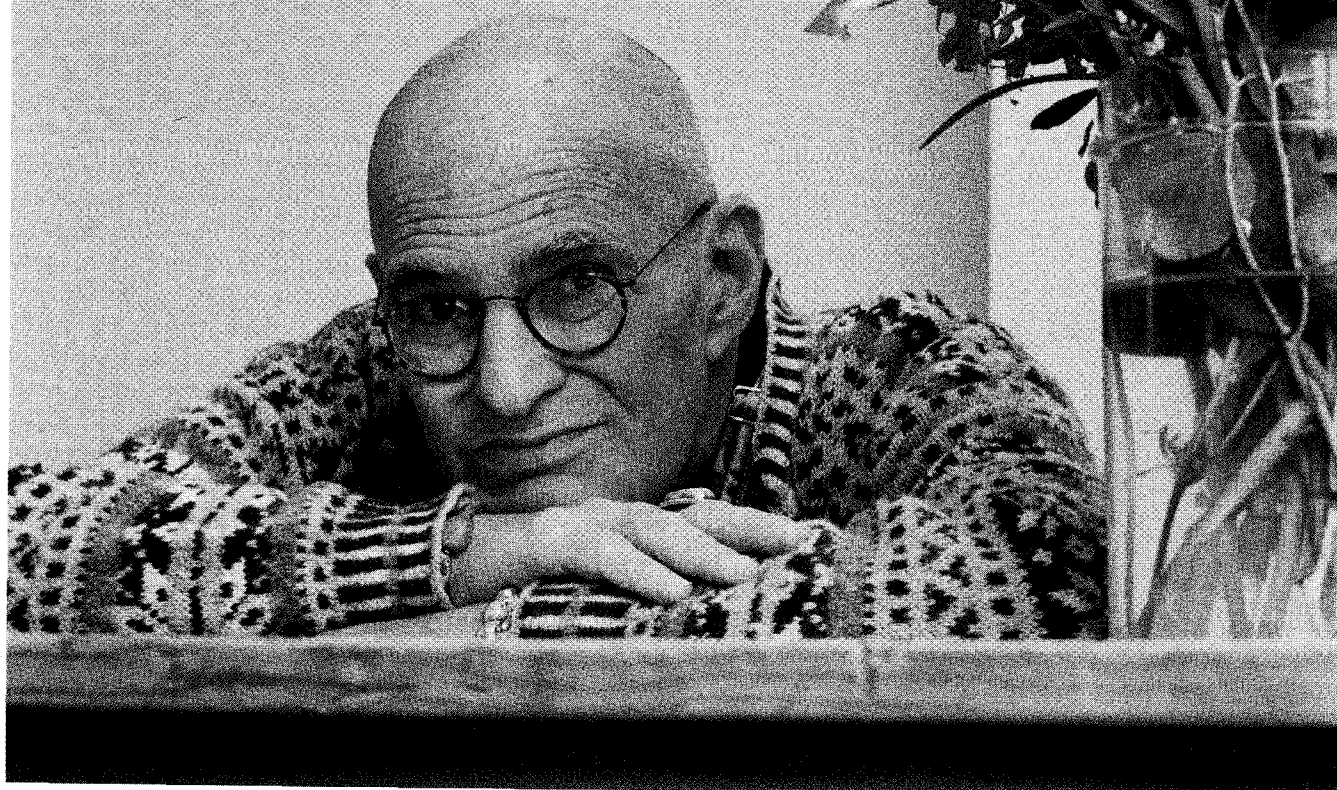
*"Larry helped change medicine in this country," a leading federal health official said. Photograph by Duane Michals.*



LARRY  
KRAMER

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who had always insisted that the government stay out of their lives took to the streets by the thousand to demand vigorous federal intervention on their behalf. No longer was it enough to press for the repeal of sodomy laws; homosexuals suddenly wanted benefits and protections that only Washington could provide.

Kramer's actions had even more profound effects: they helped revolutionize the American practice of medicine. Twenty-first-century patients no longer treat their doctors as deities. People demand to know about the treatments they will receive. They scour the Internet, ask for statistics on surgical success rates, and if they don't like what they hear they shop around. The Food and Drug Administration no longer considers approving a new drug until it has consulted representatives of groups who would use it. "In American medicine, there are two eras," Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, of the National Institutes of Health, told me. "Before Larry and after Larry." Fauci is the director of the N.I.H.'s program on infectious disease, and for twenty years he has been the most prominent voice in federal AIDS research. He has come to regard Kramer as a friend, but for many years he was one of Kramer's most vilified targets. "There is no question in my mind that Larry helped change medicine in this country," Fauci said. "And he helped change it for the better. When all the screaming and the histrionics are forgotten, that will remain."

It may prove difficult to think about Larry Kramer apart from his histrionics, however. What most people know about him they know from watching television, where ranting is his default mode of speech. Many of his stunts have become legend: for example, the time he stood in the street, megaphone in hand, screaming, "President Reagan, your son is gay!" The President's son always denied there was any truth to the assertion, but that didn't stop Kramer. ("I don't apologize for what I did to him," Kramer says. "I don't care what was true. We needed the attention. Ron Reagan's father was President for seven years before he said the word 'AIDS.'") Kramer helped come up with the idea, inspired by the artist Christo, to wrap Senator Jesse Helms's North Carolina home in a giant yellow condom. He also took part in a sustained assault on the late John Cardinal O'Connor that culminated on December 10, 1989, when thousands of protesters rallied at St. Patrick's Cathedral during Mass; more than a hundred were arrested, including many who were carried outside on stretchers by police. ("Our greatest fucking day," Kramer told me, the exhilaration flooding back, years later. "Who could ever buy publicity like that?") Larry Kramer may be responsible for more public arrests than anyone since the height of the civil-rights movement: AIDS activists who tried to dump the ashes of a young friend onto the South Lawn of the

White House; protesters who shut down the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, surrounded the Food and Drug Administration headquarters, and chained themselves to the gates at the headquarters of the pharmaceutical giant Hoffman-La Roche and to the Golden Gate Bridge. In 1989, Kramer even called for riots before the annual international AIDS meeting convened in San Francisco. When Louis Sullivan, the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, delivered the closing address, he was pelted mercilessly with condoms.

Kramer came off as a weird mixture of Jerry Rubin and Mahatma Gandhi: three parts obnoxiousness and one part righteous indignation. He clearly loved infamy, though, and even his best friends wondered whether his untamed abrasiveness harmed their cause more than helped it. ("Everyone would always say, 'Oh, you went too far, you shouldn't have done that,'" Rodger McFarlane recalled not long ago. "What they didn't realize was that he would rehearse those outbursts for three straight hours. He would sit there and say, 'I am going on "Donahue" or the "Today" show and I am going to say the mayor is gay, because if I do *that* it's going to make things happen.' Nobody ever gives Larry credit for his showmanship.")

In 1985, at a fund-raiser in Washington, Kramer flung a glass of water in the face of Terry Dolan, the founder of the National Conservative Political Action Committee. Dolan was gay, but he kept it secret, and nothing infuriated Kramer more than men who enjoyed gay life privately but denied it in public. (After he was done with Dolan, Kramer promptly turned himself in to Liz Smith.) On a certain level, it was all theatre—heartfelt, but theatre nonetheless. He was trained in the movie business, and he produced the AIDS epidemic as if it were a Biblical epic. Many people saw him simply as overwrought and egomaniacal—the AIDS movement's very own Norma Desmond. Not surprisingly, Kramer didn't care. "People need to talk about what you did if you want to make an impact," he told me recently. "Otherwise, why bother having a fit in the first place?"

In 1983, however, Kramer's crusade had barely begun, and it all seemed hopeless to him. "My sleep is tormented by



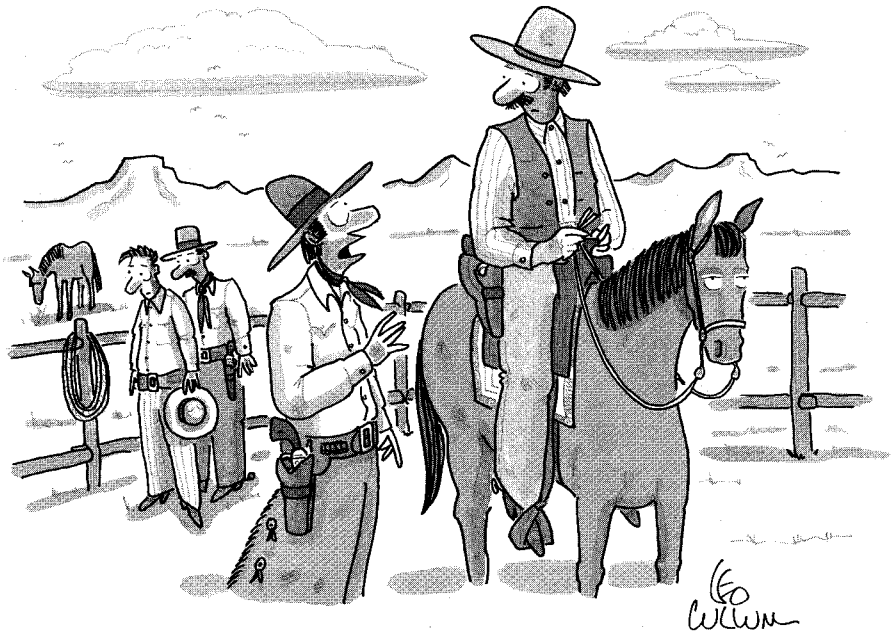
*"In the criminal-justice system, the courtrooms are cleaned every night by members of the cleaning crew. These are their stories."*



nightmares and visions of lost friends, and my days are flooded by the tears of funerals and memorial services," he wrote in "1,112 and Counting," and he concluded with what would become a mordant trademark: a list of dead friends. He then urged "every gay person and every gay organization" to get ready for a new wave of civil disobedience.

"I will never forget the day that article appeared in the *Native*," Tony Kushner told me not long ago. In 1993, Kushner received a Pulitzer Prize for his play "Angels in America," which addressed the impact of AIDS on American society. "I was in graduate school at N.Y.U. in 1983, and I was in the second-floor lounge in the directing department." Stephen Spinella, who went on to perform the lead role of Prior Walter in Kushner's dark epic, was sitting across from him on a sofa. "I can still see him there," Kushner said. "He was wearing pink socks. I had just started coming out of the closet, and gay life seemed so exciting. By the time I finished the piece, I was literally shaking, and I remember thinking that everything I had wanted in my life was over. I was twenty-six years old and I didn't really have the strength to deal with what he was saying, but I had to acknowledge that we were faced with a biological event of an awesome magnitude—a genuine plague. People were beginning to drop dead all around us, and we were pretending it was nothing too serious. With that one piece, Larry changed my world. He changed the world for all of us."

People tend to remember their first encounter with Larry Kramer. I certainly remember mine. It was in 1986, and I was attending a public hearing at the Food and Drug Administration's headquarters, in the Washington suburbs. An advisory panel was considering whether to approve a new treatment for one of the more debilitating infections that AIDS can cause. Kramer, and many other activists, believed that the government was taking far too long to approve new treatments, and he was in the audience that day to say so. In front of several hundred people, he let loose a tirade against the "AIDS establishment," by which he meant the doctors, reporters, and politicians (among many others) who he believed were conspiring, through



*"Slim has a dry scaly patch on his neck! Ride to town and bring the dermatologist."*

negligence, ill will, and sheer stupidity, to kill gay men. It was a typical Kramer tantrum, and I wasn't paying much attention until I heard him say my name, followed quickly by the words "Nazi" and "murderer." The AIDS epidemic was entering its most virulent phase in the United States, and I had just begun to cover it as a medical reporter for the *Washington Post*. Although Kramer reserved his most withering hatred for the *Times*, he was convinced that the *Post* (and nearly every other paper) was ignoring the severity of the epidemic largely because so many of those affected were gay.

I thought that Kramer was a complete lunatic. Over the years, however, I came to realize that he is not quite as emotional or as spontaneous as he appears. ("I don't walk around the streets of the Village screaming at my greengrocer, you know," he told me one day. "I am extremely shy. People, when they meet me, are always shocked that I'm not foaming at the mouth or shouting obscenities.") In fact, Kramer uses anger the way Jackson Pollock worked with paint; he'll fling it, drip it, or pour it onto any canvas he can find—and the bigger the canvas the more satisfied he is with the result. Subtlety repulses him. His novels, plays, and essays are filled with lists of enemies, hyperbolic cries of despair, and enough

outrage to fill the Grand Canyon. His nonfiction work is collected in a volume called "Reports from the Holocaust," named, as Kramer told me, because "AIDS is genocide against our people. It's a more successful holocaust than Hitler could have imagined."

To straight America, Kramer has often seemed a radical gay extremist. The truth is more complex; Kramer occupies a strange niche in the history of activism. For years, he was reluctant to get involved with any political group, and then, when he did jump in, the groups were often reluctant to have him. "Larry is priceless, but he frightens people," said Sean Strub, an AIDS activist from the early days, who went on to start *POZ*, the first major magazine dedicated to people infected with H.I.V. "Fear is one of the most powerful motivational forces on earth, and it has been Larry's most effective ally. But his tactics and his style can be difficult to take. As a result, he was not always welcome, even when he was saving people's lives."

By the late nineteen-eighties, though, the streets of the Village and of the Castro, in San Francisco, seemed like a new kind of war zone; the buildings were intact, but everything else had been destroyed. Lovers, brothers, roommates, and friends were dying by the hundred,





*"I hope you don't call that a party face."*

and it was no longer possible for anyone to ignore.

Kramer's fame grew as the epidemic intensified. He wrote two autobiographical AIDS plays, "The Normal Heart" and "The Destiny of Me," which brought him equal measures of acclaim and controversy. "The Destiny of Me" was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize in 1993 (losing to "Angels in America"), and it won an Obie as the best play written that year. "The Normal Heart," which is generally viewed as a touchstone in the literature of AIDS, has been produced hundreds of times since it opened, in 1985, and it is the longest-running play ever staged at the Public Theatre. For the past two decades, Kramer has been at work on a manuscript called "The American People," an ambitious historical novel that begins in the Stone Age, includes, for example, details of Kramer's assertion that Abraham Lincoln was gay, and continues into the present. "He has

set himself the hugest of tasks," Will Schwalbe told me. Schwalbe, who is the editor-in-chief of Hyperion Books, will become Kramer's literary executor. He is so far the only man to have read the entire manuscript, which he described to me as "staggering, brilliant, funny, and harrowing."

Despite that, Larry Kramer will almost certainly be remembered above all as the signature activist of the age of AIDS. By the end of the eighties, he had started the two most effective AIDS advocacy organizations in America—both of them conceived in flashes of pure rage. Just after New Year's Day in 1982, Gay Men's Health Crisis was formed at a meeting in his Greenwich Village living room. Several years later, Kramer started the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power—more commonly known as ACT UP. Dozens of chapters were formed, from San Francisco to Bombay. Each was filled with desperate, aggressive, and

often exceptional young men who, in the end, made Gay Men's Health Crisis look like a sleepy chapter of the Rotary Club.

I had not seen Larry Kramer for nearly a decade when I visited him last fall at his country house, in northwestern Connecticut. It was an unusually warm afternoon, but Kramer, swaddled in Oshkosh overalls and a big woolly sweater, looked as if he might disappear into his clothes. Kramer has always seemed large and loud; in truth, he is only loud. He's a slight man with dark, soulful eyes framed by wild and often unkempt eyebrows. His voice is unforgettable: like a shrill, high fog cutter. No matter how many times you have experienced it, and, no matter how pleasant he means to be, when you pick up the telephone and hear the words "Hi, it's Larry" it's enough to startle a Delta Force commando.

When I arrived, though, Kramer could barely muster a whisper. He is sixty-six, and he believes that he has been infected with the AIDS virus since the late seventies. There was no test for H.I.V. until 1985, however, and it was only in 1988 that he stated publicly that he was infected. ("I took my first AZT in Barbra Streisand's john," he told me, with what sounded like pride.) Ever since that announcement, his death has been predicted, expected, and even, by some, awaited. Yet Kramer has watched as dozens, then scores, and finally hundreds of his friends and acquaintances have died. He long ago stopped attending their funerals. He still has his apartment in New York, but he prefers to spend his time at the country house, which was designed by his longtime lover, David Webster. It has a large open study, where Kramer writes, and where he has a view of a misty lake and rolling hills behind it. "The New York I love is gone now," he told me. "The world of 'Faggots' that I found so intoxicating is over. When I walk down the streets there, all I see are dead people."

AIDS has never made Kramer particularly sick, which he attributes to a variety of superstitious and emotional causes. It is also a fact that the disease attacks some people more rapidly than others. Kramer knows that, but these days he is draped from neck to toe in turquoise. He wears a thick ring on nearly

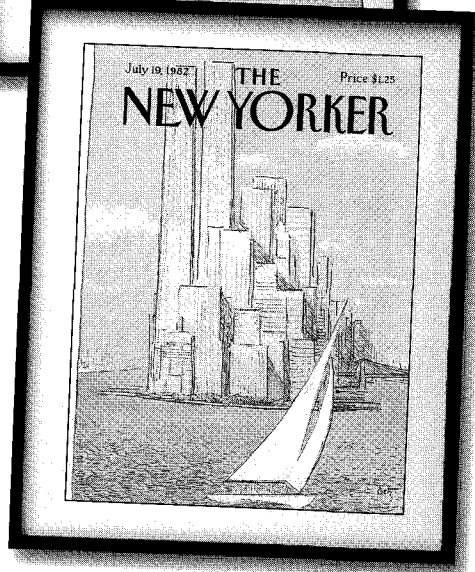


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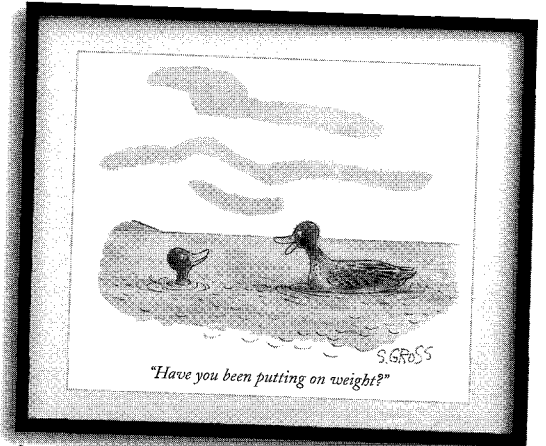
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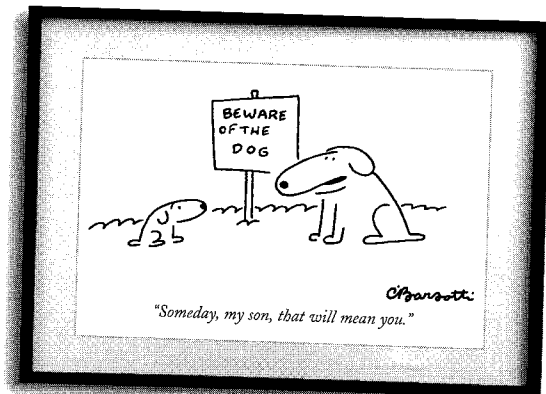
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every finger, and he has pendants, bracelets, and other charms, too: "It's silly. When I first came to New York, in 1957, after I got out of Yale, I went to a fortune-teller and she said, 'You should always wear something turquoise; it will look after you and keep you healthy.' As I have gotten sicker, I keep adding turquoise, so now I am basically a walking Sioux. But I am still here."

By any measure, that's a surprise, because about two and a half years ago Kramer started to die—not from AIDS but from end-stage liver disease caused by a long and debilitating bout of hepatitis B. Hepatitis, like H.I.V., is a viral infection that is often transmitted through the exchange of bodily fluids. Not long before I arrived in Connecticut, doctors had told Kramer that his liver could not function for more than six months; the level of hepatitis B in his blood, which for infected but healthier people is measured in the thousands, was close to the billions. But, after some months on an experimental drug called adefovir, which blocks the replication of the hepatitis virus in the body, Kramer had improved greatly. When I was with him, he was waiting—a beeper clipped to his overalls, fistfuls of pills by his bedside, and a charter plane on call—to be summoned to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center for a liver transplant, a very risky operation that Dr. John Fung, the chief of transplant surgery there, had agreed to perform. Once Kramer got the call, he would have two hours to appear in the operating room. (After one false alarm, and the travel uncertainties caused by September 11th, Kramer moved to Pittsburgh, and rented an apartment five minutes from the hospital.)

Until recently, H.I.V. infection would have ruled out any hope of receiving a liver transplant; the waiting lists are long and the hope of success limited. Yet Fung, the forty-five-year-old surgeon who replaced the legendary Thomas Starzl as the chief of Pittsburgh's highly aggressive transplant unit, persisted. Nearly two dozen H.I.V.-positive patients had had the operation by the end of last year. Three have died; the rest are in various stages of recovery. Nonetheless, Kramer would be by far the oldest such patient to attempt the complicated

surgery. There were also some touchy ethical issues to consider. Each year, more than twenty thousand people in America die while on waiting lists for organ transplants. Many people wondered why a relatively elderly person with H.I.V. disease was the right kind of candidate. ("There are a lot of crappy choices you have to make in life," Arthur Caplan, the director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania, told me. "Celebrity livers are among the worst. I am not saying he couldn't benefit; I just think other people could benefit more.")

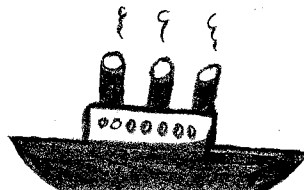
When I met with Fung in Pittsburgh, he dismissed such concerns. "This isn't about celebrity; I didn't even know who Larry Kramer was when he walked in here," he told me. "Kramer has been on a waiting list for about a year." Fung is a boyish, bespectacled man who spends almost every waking hour in the operating theatre. "People with H.I.V. disease can live for many years after this surgery. That's my bottom line. To tell somebody he cannot be treated because he has a certain virus is not how American medicine works."

Two years ago, doctors told Kramer that he was too fragile to survive even anesthesia, let alone surgery. His weight had fallen from more than a hundred and sixty pounds to less than a hundred and thirty. His stomach was often grotesquely distended from fluid that had accumulated there. Judy Falloon, who works with Fauci at the N.I.H., recommended gambling on adefovir as a last chance to bring his virus under control. (At higher doses, it had proved toxic for many AIDS patients.) Kramer asked few questions about it, and Falloon was amazed at how docile her new patient was. "He does nothing like what you might expect," she told me. "He doesn't yell. He doesn't scream. He is not even involved to the extent that is desirable." Still, she convinced Kramer that the drug was his only route to a transplant, and a transplant was his only chance to live.

Kramer struggled to get back in

shape. The day I was with him in Connecticut, an ex-Marine drill instructor stopped by to work out with him in a gym he had installed in the basement. He ate as if he were making a serious run at the Tour de France—weighing every morsel of food so that he could be sure to get the most energy out of each calorie. As Kramer inched his way up the waiting list, the possibility of death no longer seemed remote. "Somehow I never thought it would be me," he said. "That is what my activism has always been about, really. Me. I wanted to live, and I expected to be saved." Now he wasn't so sure. Kramer told me tearfully that he wanted more time with David Webster, and that he needed at least two more years to finish his book, which he feels will redeem him in the eyes of literary critics who he believes have often been unfair. He became agitated easily and on several occasions grew impatient with me because he didn't think I was paying enough attention to him. The events of September 11th had delayed my plans to visit, and Kramer had besieged me with e-mails suggesting that I was backing out, that I wasn't worthy and didn't understand the importance of his writing or his life. "I don't want a once-over-lightly character sketch with a few anecdotes about the more outrageous things I might have said or done," he wrote in one message. "You want to write something important about me that hasn't been written before, fine and great. Otherwise I don't think you're my man."

Larry Kramer was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, in 1935. His grandparents on both sides ran grocery stores. He grew up mostly near Washington, D.C., the younger of two sons. (His older brother, Arthur, is a successful lawyer in New York.) Kramer's father, George, was a government attorney who never hid his dislike for his younger son. "The first person who ever called me a sissy was my father," Kramer told me. "He called me that all the time. He would hit me and scream at me; he just couldn't stand what I had become." Kramer had a more complicated, but loving, relationship with his mother, Rea, who was a social worker for the Red Cross. He attended Woodrow Wilson High School in Washington,



which was the best public school in the city. Kramer intended to go to Harvard, but when his father saw the application lying on the dining-room table he ripped it in two, saying that no son of his was going there. George Kramer was a Yale man. Larry's brother Arthur was a Yale man. "And, God damn it, I was going to be one, too," Kramer recalled.

He felt even more detached and alone at Yale than he had in Washington, and in 1953, his freshman year, after a suicide attempt in which he swallowed two hundred aspirin (and then called the campus police), he told his brother that he was gay. Arthur helped find him a psychiatrist. ("He tried to change me back from being a fag," Kramer recalled. "That was what they did then.") After Yale, he was required to enlist in the Army, where he and some other friends were assigned to work on Governors Island. "It was a lark," he said, because they were able to visit Manhattan every week. It was the end of the nineteen-fifties, a time of bohemian pleasure in the Village, and the true beginning of his gay life.

Kramer had been in the Glee Club at Yale, and it helped confirm a decision to make a living on or around the stage. After the Army, he got his first job, as a messenger in the mail room at the William Morris Agency in New York. He earned thirty-five dollars a week. "God, how I loved that job," he told me one day. "You could read everybody's mail. I read each teletype, and I knew how much Frank Sinatra was making in

Vegas. I knew who was fucking whom. It was an unbelievable dream for a guy like me."

Kramer answered an ad in the *Times* for a "motion-picture trainee," which turned out to be a job running another teletype machine, at Columbia Pictures. He was going to turn it down until he was told that the room was across from the president's office and that only the top executives sent or received messages. He took the job, and stayed for nearly a year. He then began to study acting at the Neighborhood Playhouse, which was run by Sanford Meisner. Sydney Pollack was teaching there at the time, and, while fond of Kramer, he was blunt about his acting prospects: "He told me I was very good, but that I would never get the girl."

By 1960, Kramer was back at Columbia, working as a script reader in the New York office. Kramer impressed Mo Rothman, who was in charge of the studio's European business, and in 1961 he was invited to set up a story department in London. "Those were the golden years for film in London," he said. "I was able to witness and be a part of some of the greatest films of my time: 'Dr. Strangelove,' 'Lawrence of Arabia,' 'Guns of Navarone.'" In 1965, he learned that David Picker, the president of United Artists, was looking for an assistant in New York. Kramer got the job but immediately regretted it. "It was extremely boring and I missed London. But you couldn't just quit on David Picker unless you were ready to leave the business for good."

"I told him that I wanted to go back to England and make movies. He agreed to send me as an associate producer on a film called 'Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush.' The script was dreadful, and there was no way the film was going to get made; to save my job, I sat down and rewrote the screenplay. Picker liked it and the movie was back on." In 1966, the director Silvio Narizzano, who had just completed "Georgy Girl," told Kramer that he wanted to make a film of the D. H. Lawrence novel "Women in Love," and he invited him to produce it. Kramer read the book, optioned it from the Lawrence estate for fifteen hundred pounds, and hired the British playwright David Mercer to write a screenplay. "It was a horrible Marxist tract," Kramer said. "Just horrible. I had no script and no more money for another writer. So, once again, out of desperation, I sat down and wrote one myself." Picker liked Kramer's script enough to back the film; Kramer asked Peter Brooke and Stanley Kubrick, among others, to direct; eventually, Ken Russell said yes. The movie, which was made for a little more than a million dollars, was nominated for four Academy Awards, one of which was for Kramer's sexually explicit screenplay. (He lost to Ring Lardner, Jr., for "M\*A\*S\*H.")

Kramer was thirty-four years old at the time, and his unexpected success helped establish him in Hollywood. He went there in 1970 and wrote the screenplay for the musical "Lost Horizon," which turned into the "Ishtar" of its day. ("It was the one thing I have done in my life that I truly regret," Kramer told me. "People still laugh about it.") Nonetheless, he was paid nearly three hundred thousand dollars for his work—an enormous sum at the time. Kramer gave the money to his brother, who invested it so well that Kramer never had to rely on a paycheck again (and is now wealthy). He decided to write about gay life, and by the middle of the nineteen-seventies he was back in New York, working on "Faggots" and looking for something exciting to happen.

Early in 1982, there was still no name for the disease that was beginning to spread among homosexuals in New York and Los Angeles; it was often referred to as GRID (gay-related immune



*"I clipped his wings, but they grew back."*



deficiency), because its prevalence among heterosexuals in Africa was largely unknown. "The Normal Heart" recounts the story of the beginnings of the epidemic in New York, as seen through one angry man's eyes. Kramer's battles with Mayor Koch, the city of New York, the *Times*, his ambivalence about his brother (to whom he is now close), his furtive love affair with a once married (and now dead) man were all up on the stage each day for more than a year. So was his growing disgust with the gay community. Kramer had never been a joiner; still, in January of 1982 he arranged a meeting at his apartment and made a point of inviting attractive, successful men—not the fringe crowd that so often fills radical groups. After listening to some dark theories and the grim facts, one of the men at that first meeting, Paul Rapoport, said, "Gay men certainly have a health crisis on their hands," at which point Kramer shouted, "That's it! That's our name!"

It turned out to be one of the most important political gatherings of the era. "I walked into that very first meeting in Larry's apartment, which overlooked Washington Square Park, where there were friends and strangers," Rodger McFarlane told me. "And I watched Larry Kramer call a room full of grown, wealthy, accomplished men a bunch of pathetic fucking sissies to their faces, and it was astonishing. I thought he so fundamentally and so viscerally believed that he was right and that we could fix it and I fell madly and hopelessly for him."

G.M.H.C. set up the first AIDS hot line in the world, which within days was swamped by calls. Kramer was thrilled by the excitement of it all, yet he clashed with the other volunteers, and in particular with a closeted banker and former Green Beret named Paul Popham, who emerged as the first president of the organization. From the start, there was tension over their different approaches to the city, to gay life, and, especially, to Mayor Koch. Popham didn't want to antagonize the Mayor; Kramer detested Koch and, as the epidemic spread, he seemed to hold him personally responsible.

Not long ago, I visited Koch at his law office near Rockefeller Center. He hasn't changed any more than Kramer has: still ready to battle over the most



*"It says in lieu of gifts we should not show up."*

minuscule of issues. In many ways, they were the perfect couple: two morally certain Jews from Greenwich Village (with, ironically, apartments in the same building on lower Fifth Avenue). Koch's law office is filled with pictures of friends and accomplices: Al D'Amato, Cardinal O'Connor, even the Pope—not exactly Kramer's crowd. Koch told me that he hoped Kramer would survive, and he called him a "genius" for starting G.M.H.C. and ACT UP. But that is pretty much where the compliments ended. "He blames *me* for the deaths of his friends," Koch said, shouting the word "me" loud enough to startle his secretary. "I just looked at the figure today. It's something like forty or fifty million people have H.I.V. I'm responsible? I mean, people who know they shouldn't fuck without a rubber and nevertheless do—I'm responsible for that?"

Koch continued, "His position is that the reason I didn't want to see him at the beginning of the epidemic or have anything to do with AIDS is that people would think I was gay and it would injure my reputation. That is such bullshit: I have a record on this issue that goes back to the year Gimel. There has never been anybody else that has such a record. . . . For Kramer, it doesn't make a difference whether you are a friend of his

or not. Ultimately, he attacks you, and he seeks to destroy you. He is brilliant. I say that without reservation. But he is deadly."

Koch did say that he regretted not having met with Kramer in the early days of the epidemic. When I told Kramer that, he spat; he still loathes Koch and takes delight in his own childish rudeness toward him. "One day after he was out of office, I was in the lobby getting the mail and suddenly I looked up and Ed Koch was standing in the lobby right in front of me. He was trying to pet my dog Molly and he started to tell me how beautiful she was. I yanked her away so hard she yelped, and I said, 'Molly, you can't talk to him. That is the man who killed all of Daddy's friends.'"

Kramer alienated virtually everyone: he even publicly attacked Rodger McFarlane, one of his closest friends. Kramer's eruptions were too much for the emotionally burdened people of Gay Men's Health Crisis; he constantly threatened to quit, and, finally, when his anger boiled over at not being included in a long-sought meeting with Koch, his offer was accepted by the board.

"My lowest moment was at a get-together at a gay bar of all the G.M.H.C. volunteers," Kramer said. "It was a social thing at a place called Uncle Charlie's South. I knew the d.j. I got myself into

his booth and I took the microphone. I said, 'This is Larry Kramer. I started this organization and I want to return and they won't let me and you must make them take me back.' I was screaming. I said they were cowards.

"It went down like a ton of lead. People looked at me like I was pathetic. That was when I got bitter. It seemed to me that everybody was just lining up to die. Rodger maintains it was my subconscious talking because I wanted to go away and write 'The Normal Heart.' But I should have kept my power base. I went from coming home and my answering machine had fifty messages to coming home and there was nothing. Before, people listened to my anger because I was Larry Kramer of G.M.H.C. Then, in one day, I was just nobody."

Kramer's most furious journey—the founding of ACT UP—began in 1987, after a visit to an AIDS hospital in Houston. By chance, he was scheduled to deliver a speech the following week at New York's Lesbian and Gay Community Center, on West Thirteenth Street. "That day, or the day before, there had been an article in the *Times* about two thousand Catholics who marched on Albany because they weren't getting something they wanted," Kramer recalled. "And I said to these people, that night, 'How can two thousand Catholics go to Albany and you are dying and you can't even get off your asses except to go to the gym?' And for the first time I did my famous shtick"—something he would repeat, with undiminished effect, for years. "I said, 'O.K., I want this half of the room to stand up.' And they did. I looked around at those kids and I said to the people standing up, 'You are all going to be dead in five years. Every one of you fuckers.' I was livid. I said, 'How about doing something about it? Why just line up for the cattle cars? Why don't you go out and make some fucking history?'"

Two weeks later, a piece by Kramer appeared on the *Times* Op-Ed page—arguing that the F.D.A. was the biggest obstacle to developing new drugs. Some of those who had heard Kramer's speech decided to demonstrate on Wall Street. The crowds were huge, and Burroughs Wellcome quickly cut the price of AZT, which at the time was the only drug

## SHORE ROAD

Amazing how they hang on,  
these battered bungalows  
with jaunty names from the forties—  
Mairzy Doats, On the Rocks, At-Eze,

Shipshape, its upstairs prow  
sagging like the toe of an ancient  
upside-down boot.  
The porch swings are peeling,

the children have their own lives.  
Still, somebody  
crew-cuts the crabgrass  
that ends in beach or marsh,

puts out the plastic lawn chairs,  
launders the white curtains  
through which one glimpses  
bedrooms that glow pale yellow

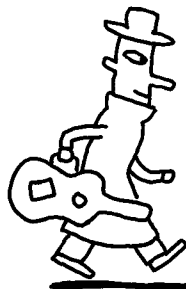
available to treat the virus itself. "We got going on a real high," Kramer recalled. "What was interesting about ACT UP and a main reason for its success was that everyone was really getting scared. The people getting AIDS were all the cool people, the men who were all part of the scene. Good-looking hot guys. Instead of going to the bars, you went to an ACT UP meeting." Those meetings became the essential event of the week in the Village. The numbers of people attending quickly grew from a few dozen to a few hundred. "Finally, we were having a thousand people at each meeting," Kramer said, "and we had to move to Cooper Union. The motto plastered over half the walls in New York was 'Silence=Death,' and we were ready to start shouting."

It is difficult to overstate the impact of ACT UP. The average approval time for some critical drugs fell from a decade to a year, and the character of placebo-

controlled trials was altered for good. The National Institutes of Health even recognized ACT UP's role in getting drugs to more people earlier in the process of testing; soon changes in the way AIDS drugs were approved were adopted for other diseases, ranging from breast cancer to Alzheimer's.

"Before AIDS and before ACT UP, all experimental medical decisions were made by physicians," Anthony Fauci said one afternoon this winter, when I visited him at the N.I.H. campus. "Larry, by assuring consumer input to the F.D.A., put us on the defensive at the N.I.H. He put Congress on the defensive over appropriations. ACT UP put medical treatment in the hands of the patients. And that is the way it ought to be."

ACT UP's success did nothing to mellow Kramer; on the contrary, it seemed to validate his approach. In speeches, in public appearances, and in writing, he put forth two views of the universe: his own and that of the liars, Nazis, and murderers who opposed him. (When Yale refused to accept his papers and a large donation to create a chair in gay studies, Kramer accused officials there of every crime from homophobia to Nazism. Not until 1997, when the university agreed to accept a million dollars from Kramer's brother and establish the Larry Kramer Initiative for Lesbian and





or lilac, like Easter eggs.  
On the dresser, Mass cards, seashells,  
photos—Sue and the girls  
and what was his name? the dog

who loved chocolate ice cream?  
Terrible how you forget, but  
never mind, it's another morning  
for the Kerrys and Angelinis

hoisting their Irish and Italian flags  
as if it didn't matter that they're going,  
like the geese unravelling  
southward over the sea grass,

a few less every year,  
like "swell" and "swank"  
or the girls' names on the housefronts:  
Miss New Britain, Wendy-Ann.

—Katha Pollitt

Gay Studies, did he back off.) Today, he says that such tactics were always necessary; others aren't so sure. "If you call someone who is not doing enough in some bureaucracy a murderer, what do you do when somebody is stabbing someone in the street?" the writer Andrew Sullivan asks. Sullivan is gay, H.I.V.-positive, and conservative. "Once you debase the currency of language, how do you have somebody take you seriously? Can everyone be evil all the time? Is everyone a Nazi?"

There were also problems with the ACT UP approach to distributing medicine. Easing federal regulations was necessary. But scores of drugs were made available and used widely before they had been tested long enough for scientists to know if they would ever work. (And, if they did work well, it was impossible in such a short trial period to assess the way they interacted with other medications or how long their benefits would last.) Nonetheless, the speedy new timetable changed the course of the epidemic in countries rich enough to supply those drugs. Sophisticated anti-retroviral medicines now make AIDS a chronic but relatively manageable disease for hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Kramer's tendency to look for the dark side prevents him from finding much value in this. "Kids don't see the

dangers of AIDS anymore. It's not that they don't care, but they know they are not going to fall over dead quite as fast as we fell over dead. I am seen again as a prude. I always will be." It is true that just a few years ago a bathhouse opened down the street from G.M.H.C.; in some places, particularly in San Francisco and Miami, there are even groups—Sex Panic is the best known among them—that argue that gay men spend too much time worrying about public health and not enough about their sexual rights. It is also true that AIDS is no longer an absolute death sentence, and that has, naturally, caused people to relax their vigilance. These days, once again, Kramer finds himself attacked more often by the left—and the gay world—than by conservatives. "I see the statistics suggesting that drug resistance is increasing, that young men are getting infected at higher rates and ignoring safe sex, and it makes me feel like I wasted my life. These kids better learn how to scream, because being sweet won't work. That much I know. Honey doesn't get you a fucking thing."

Last December 21st, a forty-five-year-old man from Allegheny County, in Pennsylvania, died of a brain embolism. Within a few hours, Kramer was in the operating room, ready to receive

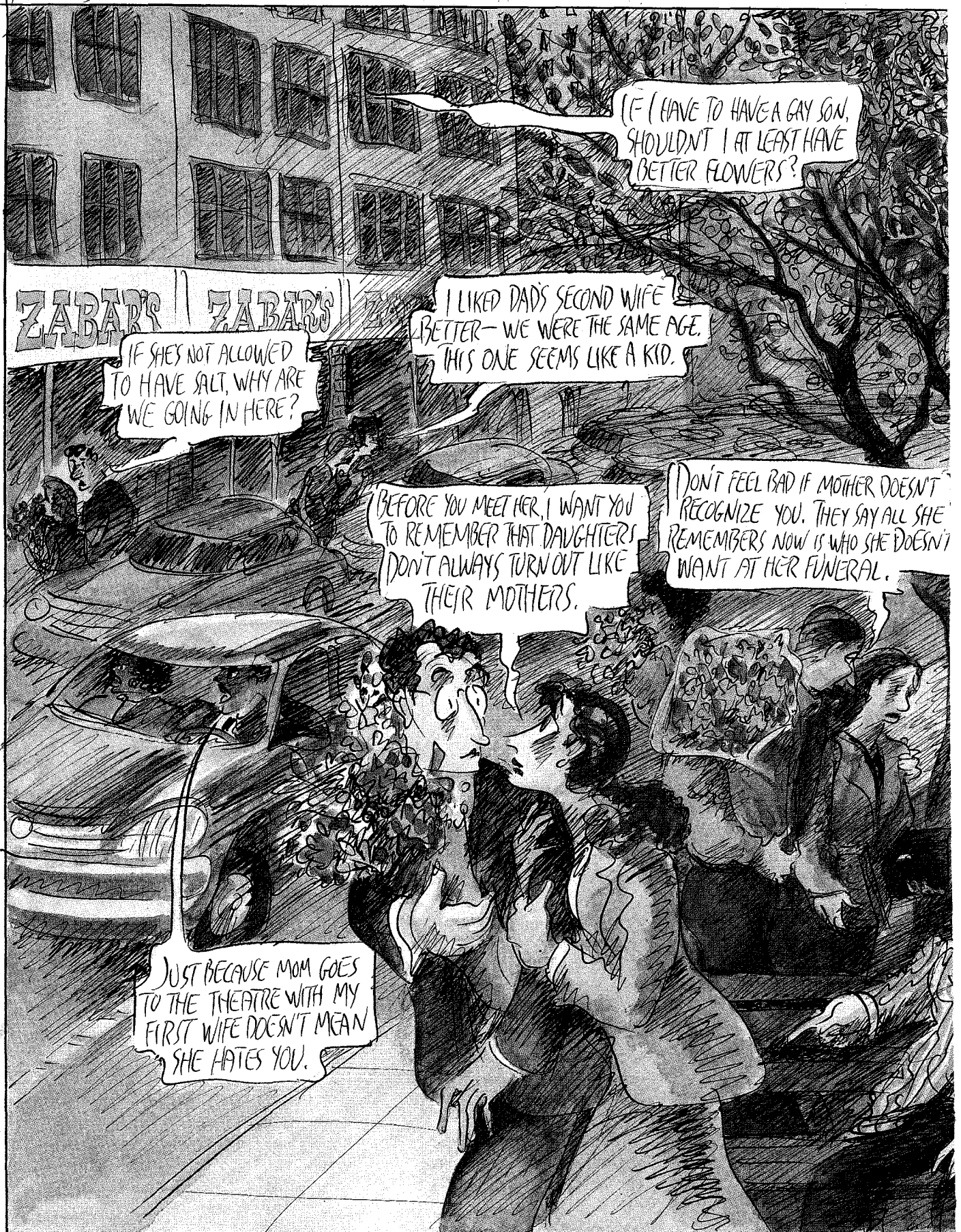
his liver. The surgery lasted thirteen hours, and afterward I heard only disquieting reports from the team at the University of Pittsburgh. The operation was more complicated than expected, Kramer was in critical condition (which is natural after transplant surgery), and it would be a while before anyone could tell how he would do. Then a headline was sent out by one of the wire services: "AIDS ACTIVIST LARRY KRAMER DIES."

The story itself, however, stated that Kramer seemed to be doing fine. The headline was one of those mistakes you get to cherish and put on your office wall. Before it could be retracted, however, tens of thousands of people got the news that Kramer had died. In fact, Kramer was out of intensive care in days and walking in less than a week, and by New Year's Eve he was calling to wish me well. He will remain in Pittsburgh for at least another month, while the doctors balance the complicated mixture of drugs required to keep his H.I.V. in check with the drugs needed to keep his body from rejecting the new liver. (When I told him I didn't think I would be back there before writing this article, he responded immediately, by e-mail, in capital letters: "HOW CAN YOU WRITE ABOUT ME IF YOU HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN MY SCAR?")

He has bad days, but his recovery has been rapid. To see that, I have to only look at my in-box—he can fire off dozens of e-mails an hour. The doctors took out his last tube in April. Lately, he has been working on his novel again and dreaming of returning home to New York and, especially, Connecticut. But, increasingly, he has been talking about the shortage of organs in the United States and how "politicians don't take it seriously and what an incredible outrage it is for somebody to die because they can't figure out a system in this country to supply organs." The tempo of questions has quickened as his health improved: Did I know how many goddam organs are just tossed into the ground each year, killing people, killing hope? Did I know that in many other countries you are presumed to be a donor unless you opt out? Here it is the opposite. "Somebody needs to be fighting about this," Kramer told me not long ago on the telephone. "Somebody needs to just get up and explode." ♦



SECOND SUNDAY IN MAY



(IF I HAVE TO HAVE A GAY SON,  
SHOULDN'T I AT LEAST HAVE  
BETTER FLOWERS?)

ZABAR'S ZABAR'S

IF SHE'S NOT ALLOWED  
TO HAVE SALT, WHY ARE  
WE GOING IN HERE?

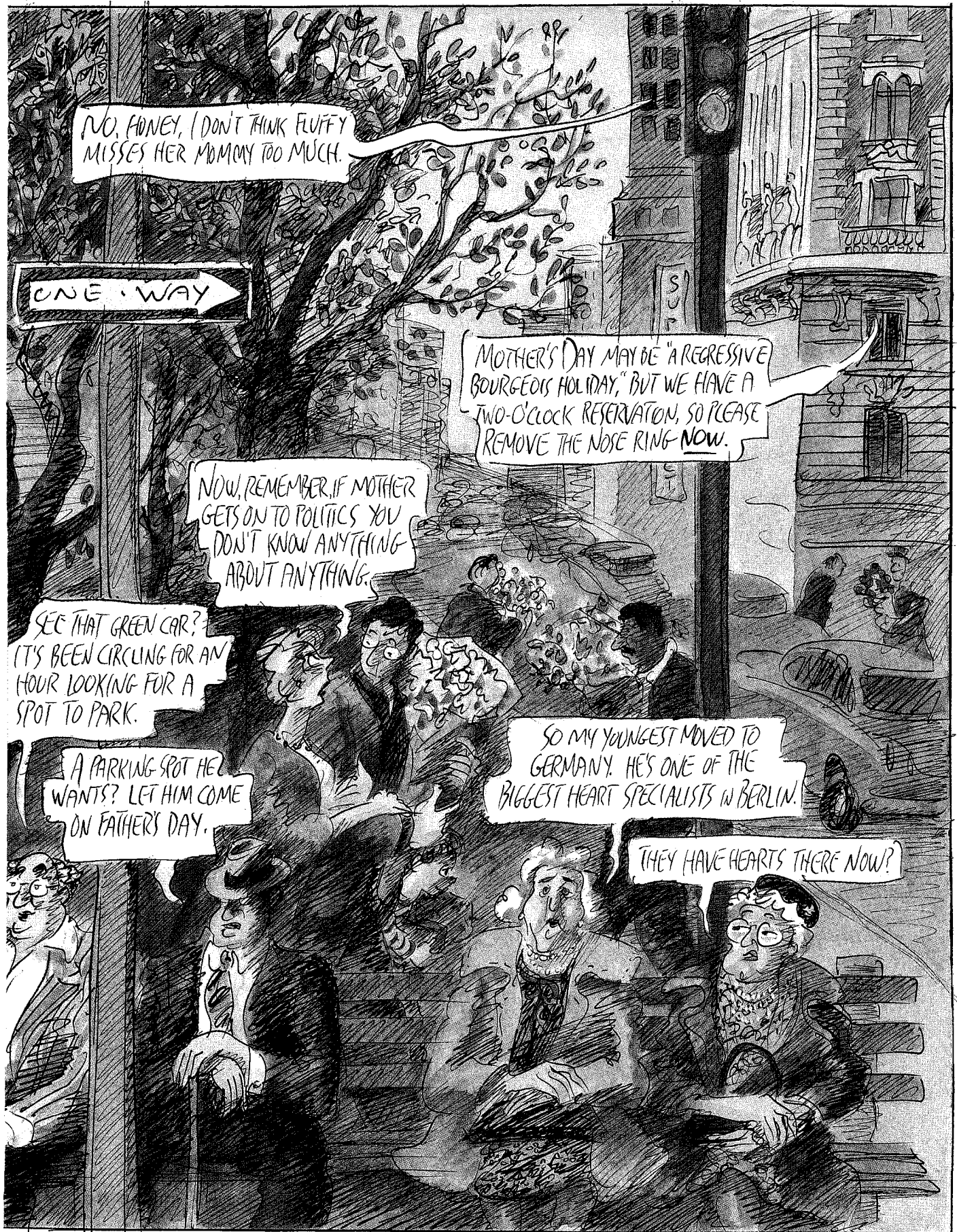
I LIKED DAD'S SECOND WIFE  
BETTER— WE WERE THE SAME AGE.  
THIS ONE SEEMS LIKE A KID.

BEFORE YOU MEET HER, I WANT YOU  
TO REMEMBER THAT DAUGHTERS  
DON'T ALWAYS TURN OUT LIKE  
THEIR MOTHERS.

DON'T FEEL BAD IF MOTHER DOESN'T  
RECOGNIZE YOU. THEY SAY ALL SHE  
REMEMBERS NOW IS WHO SHE DOESN'T  
WANT AT HER FUNERAL.

JUST BECAUSE MOM GOES  
TO THE THEATRE WITH MY  
FIRST WIFE DOESN'T MEAN  
SHE HATES YOU.







## SHAKESPEARE IN REWRITE

*After four hundred years, scholars want to change the way we read "Hamlet."*

BY RON ROSENBAUM

In 1997, when Harold Jenkins, the editor of the Arden "Hamlet," a leading scholarly edition of Shakespeare's play, went to see Kenneth Branagh's film version of "Hamlet," he was both excited and nervous. Sitting in his home two years later, Jenkins, who was then nearing ninety years old, grew animated as he described the suspense he felt as the film reached the moment, in the fourth act, when Laertes, huddling with Claudius, reacts to the news that Hamlet has returned to Denmark.

It's a speech in which Jenkins had made a crucial single-word change in his influential, encyclopedic edition of the play, and he wondered whether Branagh would adopt his emendation. "I listened to see what was coming," Jenkins told me. "What would Laertes say?"

Onscreen, Laertes, whose father, Polonius, has been killed by Hamlet, says:

It warms the very sickness in my heart  
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
"Thus diest thou."

"Thus diest thou! Yes!" Jenkins exclaimed with all the fervor of a soccer fan. "He got it right. And, of course, it is so much more effective."

Laertes doesn't say "Thus diest thou" in either of the two most substantial early printed texts of "Hamlet"—the 1604 "Good Quarto" and the 1623 Folio version. He says "Thus *didst* thou" in one and "Thus *diddest* thou" in the other.

But Jenkins believes that his Arden "Hamlet" recovers the word that Shakespeare originally wrote with his own hand—before it was "corrupted" through carelessness in the printing house or the playhouse. Jenkins claims that he has given us the word—"diest"—that Shakespeare intended.

It's not an inconsequential decision. "Hamlet" is, on one level, a drama about the ethics of revenge. "Thus didst thou" is merely an indictment; "Thus diest

thou" is a vow of summary execution. And this is just one of hundreds of unresolved enigmas created by what has come to be known as the "textual problem" of "Hamlet."

Many people who have read "Hamlet" are not aware that the version they've read is a blended text, an artificial conflation of the differing printed texts from Shakespeare's time and immediately afterward. (There is also a third, less reputable version, known as the "Bad Quarto," but no extant manuscript in Shakespeare's hand.) Editors like Jenkins patch the play together from elements of the competing versions, threading them with conjectures and alterations of their own. This practice can obscure marked differences in the texts, and the result is a Hamlet who sometimes speaks in a blurred or bifurcated voice.

The uncertainties that "Hamlet" editors grapple with are critical to any experience of the play. Philip Edwards, who edited the New Cambridge "Hamlet," has written, "Everyone who wants to understand 'Hamlet' as reader, as actor, or director needs to understand the nature of the play's textual problems and needs to have his or her own view of them, however tentative."

Consider the famous phrase, as Jenkins renders it in his "Hamlet":

O that this too too sullied flesh would  
melt,  
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew.

It's the initial line of Hamlet's first soliloquy, his first attempt to define his despair. Here, again, Jenkins diverges from both the 1604 Quarto's "too too sallied flesh" and the 1623 Folio's "too too solid flesh," following instead a conjecture, first advanced in the nineteenth century, that "sullied" is what Shakespeare intended.

The single vowel at issue makes a difference in how we see Hamlet. "Too too sullied flesh" suggests that Hamlet's dis-

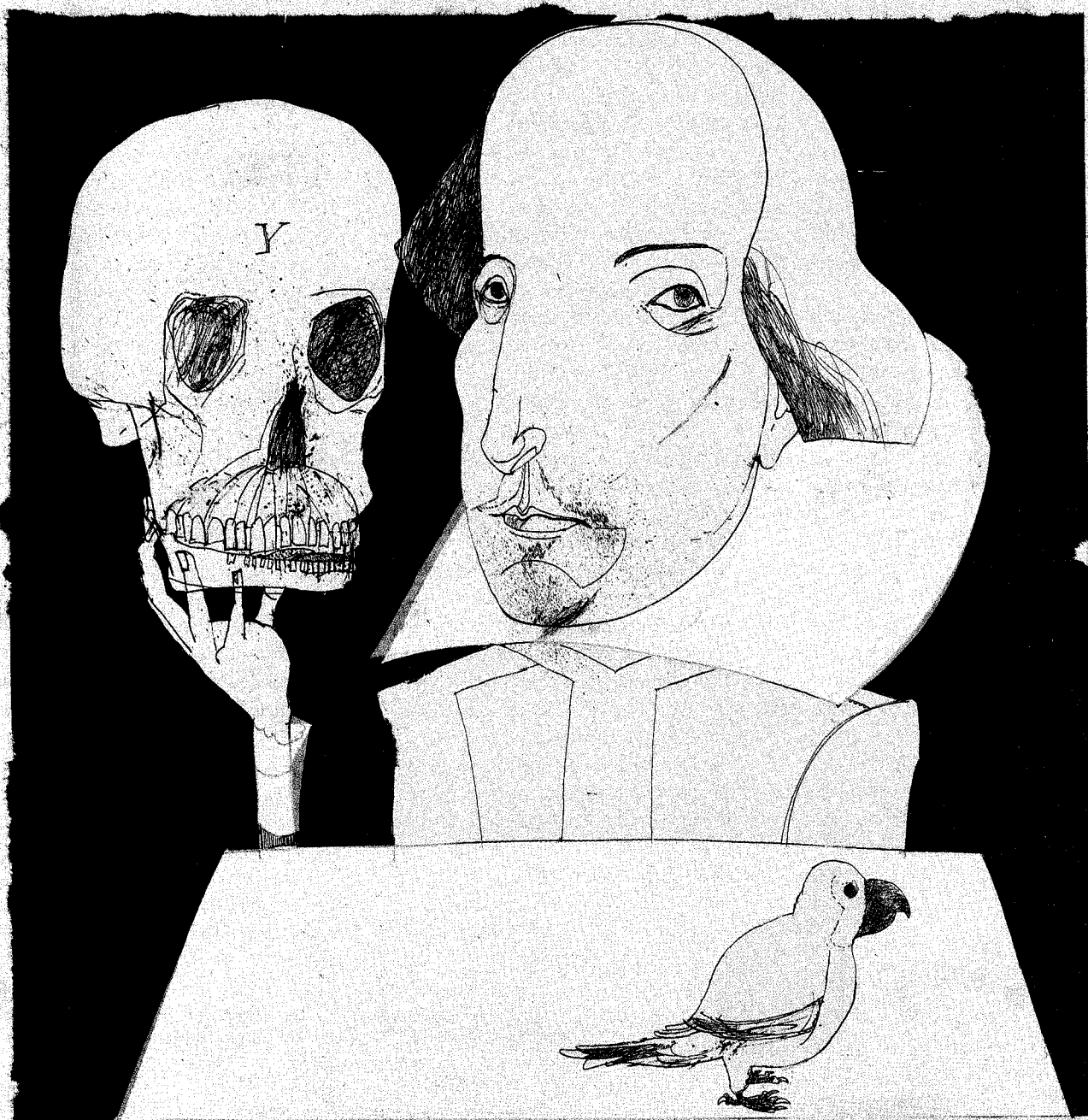
gust is directed inward, at the ineradicable stain of his own sinful human nature. "Too too sallied" suggests a Hamlet who is overwhelmed and terrified by assaults from without. "Too too solid" is too obvious to some, and may carry an unfortunate suggestion that Hamlet has a body-image problem. Which Hamlet did Shakespeare intend to give us? Or did he revise his intentions?

The Arden Shakespeare, which is based in Britain, has long been regarded as the publisher of the most thorough scholarly editions of the plays, although it has serious rivals in the Oxford, Cambridge, and Norton editions. Arden editions attempt to be definitive, and the Arden editor is expected to make lasting judgments about the innumerable conjectures that surround virtually each line and phrase of each play.

The first Arden "Hamlet," edited by Edward Dowden, a Victorian scholar, was published in 1899 and was a standard reference for more than half a century. The second Arden version, the one edited by Jenkins, came out in 1982, and might be called the last Grand Unification "Hamlet"—the last attempt to integrate the conflicting texts. Considered old-fashioned by some, to others it is traditional in the best sense. The co-editor of the *Shakespeare Newsletter*, Thomas Pendleton, believes that it will remain a classic work, "an astonishing achievement that will serve readers for years to come."

Jenkins's nearly six-hundred-page compendium of "Hamlet" commentary, lore, and disputation is more seductive than forbidding. The text of "Hamlet" is sandwiched between about a hundred and fifty pages of erudite introductory commentary and a hundred and fifty pages of "Longer Notes," which are too voluminous to fit into even the footnote-stuffed pages of the text section. Jenkins's edition offers the delights of "Hamlet" and the delights of a "Pale Fire"-like





*The conflicts are not just about the text of the play but about who Hamlet is—and what kind of artist Shakespeare was.*

novel about “Hamlet” scholars. It reads like an epic novel, a narrative odyssey in which the main character is not Hamlet but “Hamlet”—the centuries-long voyage of the play through the mind of the West.

But a new Arden edition, which will replace Harold Jenkins’s “Hamlet,” is now approaching completion. The new edition promises to be controversial, because it will attempt to disentangle the conflated “Hamlet” texts. In doing so, it will give us a “Hamlet” that, for better or worse, speaks to us with three dis-

tinct voices, in three separate texts. The preëminent drama of the divided soul in Western civilization is about to be subdivided.

Among literary scholars, those—like Jenkins—who devote their lives to the intricacies of Shakespearean textual editing are accorded a mixture of awe and pity. This is especially true of “Hamlet” editors, who are responsible for the transmission of the closest thing there is to a sacred text in a secular culture. For centuries, editors of “Hamlet” have en-

tered a garden of forking paths; some have sacrificed much of their lives to scrutinizing endlessly elusive enigmas. (Jenkins spent twenty-eight years constructing his Arden edition.) The fierce vexation at the heart of the “Hamlet” editors’ calling has sometimes driven them to despair, self-destructive obsession, and early death.

But, for the past century, despite battles over which path to take, there has been a consensus on the goal: to reconstruct a Lost Archetype, the “Hamlet” closest to Shakespeare’s “original in-

tentions." Fredson Bowers, one of the leading American figures in twentieth-century Shakespearean textual editing, coined a lovely, haunting phrase: "the veil of print." Bowers belonged to the school of the "new" or "scientific" bibliography, whose adherents believed that editors should attempt to discern, beneath that error-riddled veil, the true face of Shakespeare—to divine, from the fragmentary evidence, traces of the one true text.

That consensus has now been shattered. An influential faction of scholars has been arguing since the nineteen-eighties that the differing early editions of some of Shakespeare's major works—there are earlier and later versions of "King Lear," "Othello," and "Richard III," among others—represent not corruptions of a Lost Archetype but, rather, earlier and later drafts, reflecting Shakespeare's revisions and second thoughts as he prepared the plays for the stage. The Revisers, as they're sometimes called, argue that the drafts that have been mixed together need to be pulled apart, so that we can recover Shakespeare's "final intentions."

The Revisers have been winning converts. In 1986, the Oxford Complete Works edition of Shakespeare printed two versions of "King Lear" in a sin-

gle volume—one faithful to the 1608 Quarto, and the other to the 1623 Folio. The Oxford version was highly controversial. "The Oxford editors should be *hanged*," Harold Bloom, the author of the best-selling book "Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human," exclaimed in a debate at the 92nd Street Y. But eleven years later the Norton Shakespeare, the leading American complete-works edition, produced under the supervision of Harvard's Stephen Greenblatt, published not two but three "Lear"s—two versions adopted from the Oxford edition as well as a third, conflated version.

The new Arden will present three versions of "Hamlet" printed back to back. It will not endorse the Reviser hypothesis; it will, instead, suggest that Shakespeare's intentions, original or final, are probably beyond recovery, so the texts should be treated as separate works of art, each with its own integrity. This radical step will, without a doubt, provoke renewed debate over what kind of play "Hamlet" is and what kind of artist Shakespeare was.

The Arden editors' approach is the product of scrupulous historical scholarship—and not a deconstructionist, literary theorist's conceit about textuality. But that will not diminish its impact

on readers, who will no longer be certain which is the true "Hamlet." After four hundred years, some scholars are abandoning the effort to judge what belongs in "Hamlet" and what doesn't.

"Hamlet" seems to have been written sometime around 1599 or 1600, but it's not even clear whether Shakespeare was the first to write a play with that title. (There are reports of a lost predecessor play performed a decade earlier, called the "Ur-Hamlet" by scholars.) Of the two main versions, the 1604 Good Quarto, published a few years after the play was first staged (with Shakespeare playing the Ghost, according to legend), is the version that Harold Jenkins believes is closest to Shakespeare's lost handwritten manuscript. The First Folio version was published in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, in a compendium of thirty-six of his plays assembled by his theatrical collaborators. This is the "Hamlet" that the Revisers believed was Shakespeare's version for the stage. ("Quarto" and "Folio" refer imprecisely to the size of the paper that plays were printed on. The smaller Quartos were usually one-play, paper-back-like affairs; the Folio was about the size of an encyclopedia volume.)

Some of the differences between these two "Hamlet"s are dramatic. In the fourth act, the Quarto gives Hamlet a final, thirty-five-line soliloquy that begins:

How all occasions do inform against me  
And spur my dull revenge. What is a man  
If his chief good and market of his time  
Be but to sleep and feed?

The embittered meditation is spoken as he watches the armies of Fortinbras prepare to slaughter thousands "for an egg shell." The soliloquy is absent from the 1623 Folio.

To lose (or add) thirty-five of Hamlet's most self-lacerating lines—about "thinking too precisely," a kind of groundbreaking introspection, a self-consciousness about self-consciousness—can make a critical difference in our understanding of his evolution. In all, there are some two hundred and thirty lines in the Quarto that are absent from the Folio, including eighteen sustained passages, and some seventy lines in the Folio that are absent from the Quarto. Some of the



"Nice to meet you, Ted, and thanks for coming by on such short notice."



play's most famous phrases—"A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye," "the sheeted dead did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets," "stars with trains of fire and dews of blood," "some vicious mole of nature," "that monster, custom," "the engineer hoist with his own petard," and "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so"—are in one version but not the other. To choose the Quarto, for instance, is to gain "the pales and forts of reason" but to lose "Denmark's a prison."

But this does not begin to capture the subtle and distinctive effect of the hundreds of one- and two-word changes made within lines in the two versions. For instance, does Hamlet describe the skull of Yorick as "grinning" (Quarto) or "jeering" (Folio)? Does he cry out "O, Vengeance!" in the middle of his "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I" soliloquy, as he does in the Folio but not in the Quarto?

Further complicating matters is the third "Hamlet" text, the Bad Quarto, which was published in 1603 but was lost to scholars until 1823. (There are now only two known copies.) It's been called bad because it appears to be a truncated, unauthorized version of the play—a sort of seventeenth-century bootleg. The Good Quarto, published a year later, has about thirty-seven hundred lines and advertises itself on the title page as "Newly imprinted and enlarged to as much again as it was," only a slight exaggeration, since the Bad Quarto has some twenty-two hundred lines. Many of them sound like bad imitations of Shakespeare. The "To be or not to be" soliloquy, for instance, begins:

To be or not to be; ay, there's the point.  
To die, to sleep: is that all? Ay all.  
No, to sleep, to dream; ay marry, there it goes.

Reviser partisans such as Eric Sams, the author of "The Real Shakespeare," and Steven Urkowitz, a professor at the City College of New York and one of the first to call for dividing "Lear," have argued that the Bad Quarto was not so much bad as very early—Shakespeare's youthful first draft. Sams believes it might be a version of the lost "Ur-Hamlet" itself. Nevertheless, many scholars, including Harold Jenkins, believe that the Bad Quarto is a "memorial reconstruction," composed not from any Shakespearean manuscript but from a recollection of a

performance of "Hamlet," perhaps with the help of players on the road without a script, or reporters in the audience.

Nonetheless, Jenkins found the Bad Quarto helpful in resolving contradictions in the two more reputable texts. He used it, for instance, when he substituted "diest thou" for "didst thou" and "diddest thou." The Bad Quarto has it "thus he dies," and Jenkins reasoned that if this was a record of the play as it was heard onstage, or slightly misheard, the original verb was more likely to be "die" than "did." Jenkins also sees this as evidence that Shakespeare did not go through the Quarto with a revising hand. He told me that Shakespeare would never have changed the Quarto's "didst," which doesn't scan properly in iambic pentameter, to "diddest" merely to fix the metre: "Shakespeare would have known that 'didst' was a mistake for 'diest.'" Jenkins, I realized, had inhabited Shakespeare long enough to believe that he could, in effect, know his thoughts.

Harold Jenkins was a bit frail when I met with him in Finchley, a quiet old section of North London. He lived alone in a meticulous little cottage; his wife of forty-five years, Gladys, was killed in a car accident in 1984, two years after Jenkins's "Hamlet" finally appeared.

Jenkins told me that he attributed his sense of kinship to Shakespeare at least in part to his rural roots in the Midlands not far from Warwickshire, where Shakespeare grew up. Jenkins's father was a dairy farmer; Shakespeare's father, according to one local tradition, butchered calves to make gloves.

"I'm a country boy, and it was an essential part of my education in Shakespeare," Jenkins told me, as he prepared tea for us in the late-January London gloom. "When I think of his language—the buttercups and the lady-smocks and the marsh marigolds—these are things I was very familiar with as a child. I never see them now in London," he said. "I don't know when I've last seen the stars, whereas if you lived in the country you were terribly aware of the stars."

Jenkins began his academic career at University College London and rose to become Regius Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. The chair had previously been held by a famous Shakespearean textual scholar, J. Dover Wilson, whose

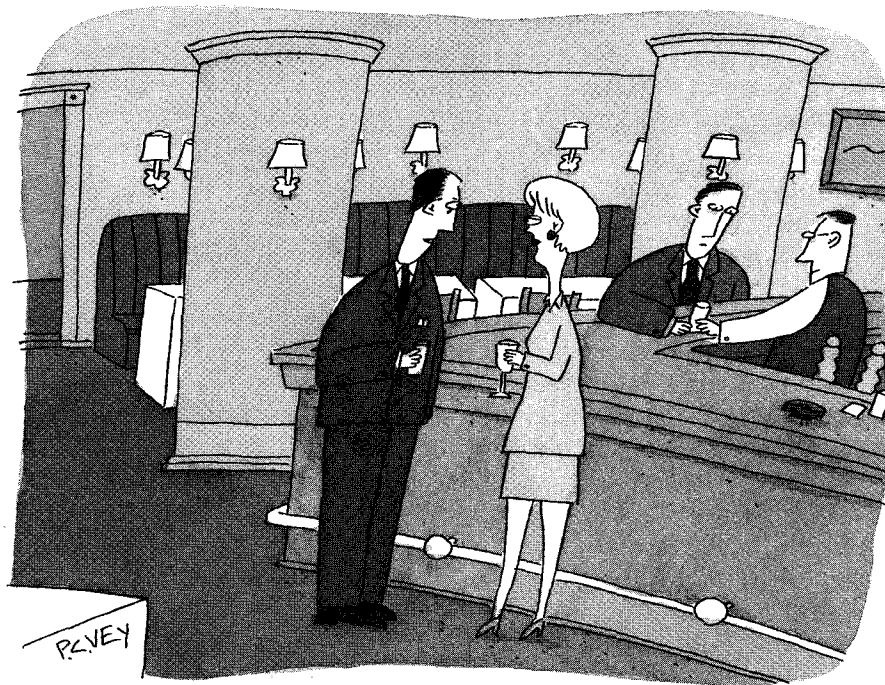
1935 book, with the tongue-in-cheek title "What Happens in 'Hamlet,'" captures the persistence of controversy over the most basic questions about the play. Jenkins is considered one of the last great scientific bibliographers, scholars who painstakingly tried to reconstruct how Shakespeare's manuscripts were turned into printed texts. In doing so, they introduced a new cast of Shakespearean characters, the type-shop compositors, whose quirks they studied to determine whether a variant was the responsibility of erratic "Compositor E," for instance, or of Shakespeare himself.

Jenkins received the commission to produce a new Arden "Hamlet" in 1954. It brought him acclaim when it was finally published, then criticism, and now the threat of obsolescence. Just as his "Hamlet" was published, the Revisers were staging their coup in Shakespeare studies. "If Jenkins's edition had come out in the seventies, its reception would have been very different," Gary Taylor, the Oxford editor who divided "King Lear" in the eighties, told me. Taylor described the behind-the-scenes victory of his Reviser faction: "It's like there's been a revolution, but the rest of the country hasn't found out about it yet. And I think that maybe the new Arden edition, the three-text 'Hamlet,' will have the effect of making the rest of the world awake to the fact that the coup has happened."

At the time of my visit, Jenkins was not yet aware of the radical surgery that Arden was about to perform on his "Hamlet." A few days later, when I spoke to Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, the editors of the new edition of "Hamlet," they told me that they had only recently made the decision themselves.

Still, Jenkins could summon vigor, passion, and a touch of bitterness when it came to defending the integrity of his work. He took much pleasure in pointing out to me that Harold Bloom, in his book on Shakespeare, had conspicuously chosen the Jenkins Arden for his citations from "Hamlet."

"Of course, all of the latest people think, Poor Jenkins, he's passé," Jenkins told me. "But I'm very skeptical. I'm quite sure the idea of Shakespeare as reviser has been much too readily accepted. They say, 'Well, if it was prepared for performance, Shakespeare was a member of the company, and he was there, so of



*"They say I'm practical in bed."*

course he must have done it! Well, it seems to be just as likely that Shakespeare, at the height of his inspiration, writes the play and writes too much, and in the end it's too long, and he knows it's too long, and he says, 'It's too long, just cut it.' And even if he did do the cutting it doesn't follow that therefore Shakespeare preferred it. There are plenty of instances of dramatists who are forced to cut, but it doesn't follow that this is how he would have wanted it."

When I asked Jenkins what he expected from the forthcoming Arden "Hamlet," he replied with characteristic elegiac gentility. "I suspect I won't like it," he said, sighing. "I suspect it will take an anti-Jenkins position." He said that he thought the new Arden co-editor, Ann Thompson, had it in for him on feminist grounds. She'd once criticized a note about Ophelia in his edition, in which he said that part of her tragedy was that she died a virgin. Thompson cited this as an example of how the male perspective dominated the editing of Shakespeare. But it didn't matter, Jenkins said: "I'm very old. I'm in my ninetieth year. I hope not to live to see it."

Toward the close of our conversation, I asked Jenkins what the edi-

tor who had given so much of his life to seeking the truths hidden beneath "Hamlet"'s "veil of print" would ask Shakespeare if he met him in the afterlife. "Well, I think I would ask him one or two things about the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy. I think it's all a little *wrong*. It doesn't seem to relate to the immediate context. I'd quite like to hear his view on it," Jenkins told me with a mischievous look. "And, yes, I'd like to ask him if he revised."

Jenkins died on January 4, 2000, less than a year after I spoke with him and well before the new Arden replaced his.

**D**id Shakespeare revise? The most obvious difference between the Good Quarto and the Folio is that two hundred and thirty or so lines in the Quarto appear to have been cut from the Folio. The Revisers argue that the more problematic difference is that seventy lines appear to have been added to the Folio. Cuts are far easier to explain away than additions that sound like Shakespeare.

One apparent addition to the Folio comes in Act IV, when Laertes, who has just arrived at Elsinore, demands from Claudius an explanation for his father's death. Ophelia enters, and Laertes

glimpses for the first time his sister's grief-addled madness. He reacts with a speech that starts out as angry posturing:

O heat, dry up my brains. Tears seven  
times salt  
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye.

Ophelia then sings a gentle mad song. But, before she does, in the Folio edition, Laertes continues:

Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine  
It sends some precious instance of itself  
After the thing it loves.

It is a passage whose tonal shift has puzzled commentators for centuries; its ethereal delicacy represents an abrupt change from the bloody-mindedness with which Laertes began. It's almost as if the passage opened with rhetoric from Shakespeare's earliest tragedy, "Titus Andronicus" ("O heat, dry up my brains" recalls Titus's "Sorrow . . . doth turn the heart to cinders"), and then shifted with almost no transition to the reconciliatory mode of "The Winter's Tale," one of his last plays, with its evocation of "great creating Nature." The addition of those lines about Nature sending a "precious instance" allows us to see a Laertes transported by his sister's grief to a register of speech that is rich and strange in that wistful, almost musical manner of the Late Romances, plays that Shakespeare wrote nearly a decade after "Hamlet." One could extrapolate a change not just in Laertes but in Shakespeare himself.

Jenkins found beauty in the "precious instance" passage, but not revision. Even though it seems to have been added to the Folio, he argued that many lines in Shakespeare's original lost manuscript for the Quarto were mistakenly omitted by the transcriber or the printing-shop compositor who set the Quarto into type. Perhaps an incidental line on the manuscript was mistaken for a deletion mark, and someone who caught the mistake later restored the "precious instance" passage in the Folio version. Thus the apparent addition of the passage wasn't a revision at all.

It sounds far-fetched, a justification for including lines that he happened to like. But Jenkins's affection has rescued a passage that for centuries suffered from the scorn of Samuel Johnson, one of Shakespeare's first and most opinion-



ated editors, whose lofty disdain for Shakespeare's occasional opacity and puns is still felt today. The "precious instance" passage could be omitted "without great loss," Johnson declared, because the lines "are obscure and affected."

Jenkins, on the contrary, took the passage to mean that "human nature, when in love, is exquisitely sensitive, and being so, it sends a precious part of itself as a token to follow the object of its love. Thus, the fineness of Ophelia's love is demonstrated when, after the loved one has gone, her mind goes too." Jenkins read into the lines a quiet tragedy of love, grief, and madness.

Different theories of the variations in the "Hamlet" texts also envision different Shakespeares—in particular, differences in the way he worked. There was the Shakespeare characterized by his contemporary admirer and rival Ben Jonson as a playwright who "never blotted a line"—who raced through manuscripts for theatrical production without looking back or revising. (This is the Shakespeare of "Shakespeare in Love.") Jonson, however, cattily added, "Would he had blotted a thousand."

Jenkins had a more reverential view. Commenting on the "irresponsible conjecture about Shakespeare's supposed revisions," he described him as "a supremely inventive poet who had no call to rework his previous plays when he could always move on to a new one."

Then there are the Shakespeares of the Revisers. Some of them see him as a deeply engaged "man of the stage"—a dramatist, primarily, rather than a poet, who was willing to cut and rewrite for purely theatrical effect. Others see him as revising for literary, linguistic, and stylistic reasons.

These alternative Shakespeare personae might reflect not so much conflicting as successive Shakespeares—a Shakespeare who revised *himself*. But Ann Thompson argues that, in any case, the different Shakespeares are blurred and lost in the conflated version of "Hamlet." She believes that by disentangling the linguistic DNA of the three texts the reader of her new edition will experience not just different versions of "Hamlet" but the different Shakespeares as well.

Barbara Mowat, the executive editor of *Shakespeare Quarterly* (who co-edited the New Folger Library "Hamlet" with Paul

Werstine), calls the forthcoming divided Arden "Hamlet" the latest in a series of "paradigm shifts" in the approach to the variant versions of several of Shakespeare's plays. In the first centuries after Shakespeare, Mowat notes, scholars generally preferred the Folio versions. (The first conflated "Hamlet," published in 1709, was biased toward the Folio.) But by the late eighteenth century their favor had begun to shift to the earlier Quartos, and by the nineteen-thirties editors had come to believe that they represented Shakespeare's "original intentions." Then a new paradigm—the Revisers' search for Shakespeare's "final intentions"—led to a shift back to the Folio versions.

The new Arden, she told me, represents the emergence of "a new-new paradigm." It's a very "Hamlet"-like paradigm in its deliberate indecision—its refusal to choose or decide among alternatives.

When I spoke to Mowat at the Folger Shakespeare Library, in Washing-

ton, D.C.—where she took me into the vaults that hold the world's largest collection of Quartos and Folios—I mentioned that I thought the best case for Shakespeare as a conscientious, even obsessive reviser of "Hamlet" was probably the one made by the Oxford poetry don John Jones. In his 1995 book "Shakespeare at Work," Jones does smart, subtle readings of the way the 1623 Folio evolved from the 1604 Quarto. "Then he must be very sure that the Quarto was written before the Folio," Mowat remarked acerbically. She cited a 1992 paper in *Shakespeare Quarterly* which argued that the Folio version was written first, though published later. In which case the Reviser partisans were reading the "revisions" backward.

All these uncertainties pose real difficulties for actors and directors. Consider the question of Hamlet's last words. As the play comes to an end, Hamlet has been wounded by a poisoned sword in his duel with Laertes. As he



"Look, I'm the bobblehead of this team."

dies, he tells Horatio that he has had a terrifying vision of the afterlife. "O, I could tell you," he begins. But there's no time, and it's too awful.

Then come Hamlet's last words: "The rest is silence."

And so it is—at least, in the 1604 Quarto. But in the 1623 Folio the line is written thus:

The rest is silence. O, o, o, o.

We don't know whether Shakespeare added these hammy-looking "O-groans" (as they're known among scholars) or, as Harold Jenkins argues, they were the interpolation of some actor playing Hamlet who wanted to prolong his dying scene. How do we decide? The stakes are high; these are the last words of the most famous (and influential) character in Western literature.

The editor of the Oxford single-volume "Hamlet," G. R. Hibbard, who chose the Folio text as the basis of his edition for the sake of its "revisions," nevertheless balked at including the unsophisticated-looking O-groans that appear in the Folio. Implicitly condemning them as unworthy of the Bard, he cut them and substituted a stage direction, "*He gives a long sigh and dies,*" words that Shakespeare never wrote.

Nonetheless, it is possible to imagine that Shakespeare wanted Hamlet to utter those final four "O"s. After all, he gives four O-groans to King Lear in the 1608 Quarto version of that play. Why deny them to Hamlet?

It's also true that actors have played the O-groans beautifully in the past. They can be transmuted from hollow-looking "O"s on the page to a tragic aria onstage, each note registering a deeper apprehension of pity and terror—Hamlet's final, wordless, four-syllable soliloquy of grief. (In the summer of 2000, at the reconstructed Globe in London, Mark Rylance played them that way.) Scholars such as Rutgers's Maurice Charney have suggested that the addition of O-groans could reflect the way Shakespeare changed as a dramatist, becoming more melodramatic, perhaps, even if there are some who do not approve of the change.

The O-groans can also be seen as a final embodiment of the play's tragic irony. Hamlet decrees, "The rest is silence," but instead of silence those final

four "O"s are torn from him by a sorrow and pain beyond his conscious command. The O-groans (like the other thematic variants) are a kind of blank screen: theories projected on those hollow "O"s reflect the theorists' vision of who they think Hamlet (and Shakespeare) ought to be.

Ann Thompson, Harold Jenkins's successor, has a haunting memory of her first transformative experience of Shakespeare. She was a Bristol-born teen-ager growing up in Devon. "We had been taken as part of a school trip to an outdoor performance of 'Lear,'" she recalled when we met one recent afternoon in her office at King's College London. The performance took place on the Cornish coast, a site that evoked "Lear" 's Dover cliffs.

What struck Thompson most powerfully about the performance, she told me, was the disappearance of Cordelia: "I was fascinated to see the actress playing Cordelia, after she came offstage in the first act; it was in the round, so you could observe the actors before and after their entrances and exits. Cordelia has nothing to do between that exit in the first act and her reappearance as Queen of France an hour and a half later, at the end of the fourth act. And so I watched her emerge from backstage in a bathing suit, go down to the shore, and plunge into the water for a swim before returning to put on Cordelia's royal robes for her entry in Act IV. That fascinated me. I don't know why, but it did."

Tall and composed, Thompson, who is fifty-four years old, seems remarkably shy, punctuating many of her remarks with a self-effacing laugh. But, however soft-spoken she is, she has emerged with a powerful voice in her profession.

At first, she told me, she resisted being drawn into the textual-editing labyrinth. "I did my Ph.D. with Richard Proudfoot," she said. (Proudfoot, a specialist in apocryphal Shakespearean texts, is one of the three Arden general editors.) "He encouraged me to edit a relatively obscure apocryphal text, which I refused to do, working instead on Shakespeare's use of Chaucer. Several years later, I got into editing when I was invited to do 'The Taming of the Shrew' for the New Cambridge Shakespeare. I discovered I enjoyed editing." She had begun editing the Arden "Cymbeline"

when Arden invited her to become a general editor, along with Proudfoot and Columbia's David Scott Kastan—a position of considerable influence in the world of Shakespeare studies.

Her rapid ascent, she told me, may in part have been a response to her critique of the male-dominated textual-editing establishment. "I had noticed how few women were involved in editing, and how they always did the same 'easy' Folio-only comedies," she said. "And I'd given a couple of conference papers on the topic, pointing out the absence of female editors of the major 'difficult' tragedies, so I more or less talked myself into editing 'Hamlet'—'Othello' and 'Lear' having already been assigned to senior male editors."

Thompson's assertiveness has caused grumbling among some "senior male editors." But the groundbreaking step she's taking in deconflating "Hamlet" should not be interpreted as an outgrowth of the gender wars. She has worked closely with male Shakespeare scholars; she made her "Hamlet"-text decision in collaboration with a colleague, Neil Taylor, whom she brought in as her co-editor on "Hamlet." (She has also co-edited a book, "Shakespeare: Meaning & Metaphor," with her husband, John O. Thompson, a film scholar.)

For two years after receiving her "Hamlet" assignment, in 1993, Thompson immersed herself in the play's textual problem. She came to the conclusion—as she told her fellow-editors at Arden in a heated confrontation—that it would be a mistake to do another conflated version of "Hamlet." "Harold Jenkins had already done that very well," she said. "I would not have wanted to edit 'Hamlet' if I had to do that. I would not have felt it was worth doing."

Her colleagues—and executives at Routledge, the publishing house that owned the Arden imprint at the time—had some practical concerns: the three-text version would be at least a thousand pages long, making it hard to sell to the college market as a single volume. Thompson proposed that it be packaged in two volumes, one with the Quarto and the introduction, and the other with the Folio and the Bad Quarto. After a struggle, she persuaded Arden to go ahead with the two-volume, three-text version. But some rival scholars have expressed dissent. Gary Taylor, the edi-



tor of the Oxford Complete Works "Hamlet," argues that including the Bad Quarto, whatever the rationale, gives unjustified prominence to what he is unafraid to call "a bad text." Including it, he says, amounts to "unediting."

Oxford's Stanley Wells once called for editors of courage to "take the risk" and divide "Hamlet" the way he and Gary Taylor had divided "Lear"—something they had avoided in their "Hamlet." Such multi-text editions, Wells said, had the potential to "open up the most illuminating discussion of Shakespeare's creative processes since the plays were first printed." But when I told him about the Arden decision, over tea in Mayfair recently, Wells sounded uneasy. He told me that a proliferation of "Hamlet's" might be "confusing to the general reader." And Frank Kermode, one of the most influential literary figures among Shakespeareans in the United Kingdom, staunchly defends the Lost Archetype theory, calling editors who seek to divide the plays the "new disintegrators."

Thompson's equanimity throughout these scholarly tempests is impressive. When I spoke with her, I felt there was something that set her apart from many of the adamant male partisans I'd spoken with: her remarkably open-minded and inclusive approach to the contentious "Hamlet" factions.

When I asked Thompson what she thought of Hamlet's final O-groans in the Folio, for instance, she cited Jenkins's conjecture that they may have been "playhouse interpolations" by an actor, but then added that this didn't necessarily (as Jenkins believed) disqualify them from consideration.

"Perhaps one can imagine Shakespeare having gone through a period of rehearsal, or having seen the thing performed and then tinkering with it afterward and thinking, Burbage did rather a good dying groan—I'll put that down to remind me," she said.

"But it's not always true that a revision is going to be for the better," she added. "Once the Oxford editors decided they wanted to base their 'Hamlet' on the Folio rather than the Quarto, on the theory that the Folio is Shakespeare's revision, you see them arguing, 'Of course Shakespeare made the correct decision to cut the "How all occasions do inform

## SKATING JUDGES ADMIT ROLE IN FRENCH ELECTION UPSET



ROBERT RISKO, ANDY BOROWITZ



against me" soliloquy.' They find all sorts of reasons why it doesn't belong, why the play is better without it. Recent editors have become obsessed with the idea 'I have to have a theory of the text, and everything else follows from my theory.'

Her stance defines the radical agnosticism of the new-new paradigm. "Publishing all three texts allows us to display the possibilities," she continued. "If you're going to publish one text, you're driven to exclude things."

This willingness to entertain conflicting theories was notable in several of the women I spoke with who were working on textual questions. I asked Thompson if her reluctance to try to prove that any one text was better than the others came from a feminist perspective.

"It's kind of nice to think so" was all she said.

Thompson told me about a paper she had recently published in *Shakespeare Quarterly* on the first "Hamlet" editor who counterposed all three texts of the play—Teena Rochfort-Smith, a Victorian prodigy. The daughter of an indigo planter and landowner, born in Calcutta in 1861, Rochfort-Smith was also one of the first women to enter the field.

At twenty-one, Rochfort-Smith took up professionally and romantically with Frederick James Furnivall, then fifty-

seven, an original sponsor of the Oxford English Dictionary who had a penchant as well for sponsoring "young ladies' rowing clubs." Furnivall was a director of the "New Shakspeare Society," a group dedicated to restoring Shakespeare's texts to what Furnivall considered to be their original purity. The Bad Quarto had come to light only about sixty years earlier, so Furnivall encouraged Rochfort-Smith to produce "a four-text edition of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' in Parallel Columns"—a comparative display of the three early-seventeenth-century "Hamlet" texts and a fourth, conflated one in four parallel columns on facing pages.

Thompson described the design Rochfort-Smith dreamed up as "a wonderfully complicated manuscript page that used four different colors of ink, three different forms of underlining, six varieties of type, and a formidable battery of asterisks, daggers, and other indicators to signal the variations in the four parallel texts." She looked through her files and retrieved photocopies of a few pages from Rochfort-Smith's four-text "Hamlet." The instructions for reading the Folio column's typographical signals are alone dizzying:

BLACK LETTER, where F1 differs from Q2. When this difference (if of word, and not of letter only) agrees with Q1, a dagger (†) is

added. Differently spelt sounds are shown thus: F1 do, Q2 doE. (Thus F1 is collated with Q2, but not with Q1, except where F1 differs from Q2 and agrees with Q1.)

After working on her "Hamlet" for a year, and completing some three scenes, Rochfort-Smith was burned to death when her petticoats caught on fire, apparently while she was setting fire to some letters—Thompson suspects they were from Furnivall—with a candle. It was a "Hamlet" editor's death: consumed by letters (and, like Ophelia, Rochfort-Smith was killed by her clothes).

It is perhaps no accident that Thompson took time out from a pressing deadline for her own "Hamlet" to write an appreciative profile that helped rescue Rochfort-Smith from obscurity. Both were pioneering women in a male-dominated field, and both had the notion that the individual texts of "Hamlet" should be allowed to speak with their own voices. In a sense, Thompson's Arden is completing the work that Teena Rochfort-Smith began.

I asked Thompson if she identified in some way with her doomed predecessor. She just laughed softly and said, "It's a very sad story."

Once the decision has been made to allow the "Hamlet" texts to speak with their own voices, the question remains: How do these voices differ? Is the Hamlet who appears on the pages of the Quarto different in character—different, at least, in important degrees—from the Hamlet we find in the Folio?

Paul Werstine, co-editor of the New Folger Library and one of the most highly respected analysts of recent textual controversies, wrote that, with regard to "Lear," opponents of the Revisers "wondered, with some justification, why Shakespeare would undertake revision merely to adjust the roles of so many secondary characters," such as Albany and Edgar. When it came to the two main "Hamlets," however, "the same objection does not apply. No role varies so much between these two texts as does Hamlet's."

How are the Hamlets different? Scholars have argued that the Quarto's prince is everything from more stoic to more brutal to more tender than the Folio's. It is here that the textual designs of the sort that scholars like Rochfort-Smith have de-





vised can draw attention to thematic differences one might not otherwise notice.

In the Oxford single-volume edition of "Hamlet," for instance, G. R. Hibbard, who uses the Folio version as the main text, does something striking with the eighteen long and medium-length passages that appear in the Quarto but are absent from the Folio. He groups them together in an appendix, and, reading it, one can find a common theme: that of madness, or, at least, a higher degree of madness than in the Folio. In the Quarto, we find a level of madness "breaking down the pales and forts of reason," that "puts toys of desperation . . . into every brain," that will "dozy the arithmetic of memory." Hamlet tells Gertrude that, when she chose Claudius over Hamlet's father:

Madness would not err  
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd.

In other words, this level of madness goes beyond any ever witnessed. Or it did until for some reason it was lost in, or deliberately cut from, the Folio. In a play that is in some sense about the varieties and degrees of madness—the madness Hamlet feigned, the madness Hamlet felt, the madness that destroyed Ophelia, the madness Hamlet accuses his mother of—the absence or presence of these passages makes the two "Hamlet"s subtly different works of art.

Another provocative way of arraying the texts, one that dramatizes word-to-word differences, was devised by Bernice Kliman, the editor of the new variorum "Hamlet." A variorum is an edition of a classic work that attempts to record not just all the variations in the play but also the significant scholarly and literary commentary. The last "Hamlet" variorum was published in 1877, and illuminates the text with a penumbra of conjectures from three centuries of poets, scholars, and madmen. In 1987, the Modern Language Association gave Kliman the assignment to produce a new variorum. Kliman, who was at work on a three-text parallel-column version of "Hamlet," was a relative outsider; she had edited the *Shakespeare on Film Newsletter* and taught at Nassau Community College. But what she lacked in powerful institutional affiliations she made up for in textual ingenuity. Fifteen years later, she and her team,

including co-editor Eric Rasmussen, are still years away from completing their work. But, meanwhile, Kliman has already found a solution to the problem of reading the two main texts together, which she calls "The Enfolded Hamlet."

I visited Kliman in her sunlit home office on Long Island's North Shore. She is an energetic woman in her sixties, with long, curly, graying black hair. We looked at an early version of "The Enfolded Hamlet," which was published as a special issue of the *Shakespeare Newsletter* in 1996 (and online at [www.global-language.com/enfolded.html](http://www.global-language.com/enfolded.html)), and she showed me how she enfolds the texts, using some lines in which Hamlet speaks of the Ghost:

There are more things in heaven and earth  
Horatio  
Than are dream't of in {your} <our>  
philosophie.

Here is how Kliman explains the initially confusing markings: "To unfold the Good Quarto, read all the words with no brackets and the words with curly brackets. To unfold the Folio version, read all the words with no brackets and the words in pointed brackets." (Other editions have used brackets on selected passages, but Kliman's version makes it possible to read all the differences this way.) The Quarto's "your philosophie" becomes the Folio's "our philosophie." Hamlet is now telling Horatio not only that he is in the dark but that all of us are in the dark.

Once you get used to enfoldment, it takes on the minimalist elegance of the solution to a complex chess problem. You catch things like Hamlet's change in tone when he speaks to Gertrude: "you question with {a wicked} <an idle> tongue." It's one of several instances in which the Folio softens Hamlet's attitude toward his mother—a change that even careful readers might gloss over but that Shakespeare, "The Enfolded Hamlet" suggests, seemed to worry over.

Kliman said that she did not intend to prove or disprove the Shakespeare-as-reviser hypothesis, or any of the other arguments that rage around the texts. She is one of those rare academics who have not lost a kind of celebratory joy in the literature they study. Her love for "Hamlet" is generous rather than jealous. "I love the infighting and the backbiting

and the multiplicity of possibilities you find over the centuries," she told me. She plans to publish an online version of the entire "Hamlet" variorum, which, theoretically, could be expanded indefinitely. If Ann Thompson's Arden edition will be the "Hamlet" of the near future, Bernice Kliman's will be the "Hamlet" of the infinitely receding future.

Reading "The Enfolded Hamlet" is almost like attending a "Hamlet" rehearsal; one can imagine Shakespeare trying out alternative readings in the theatre of his mind. And it makes a more persuasive case than any academic treatise that, when we read the alternate versions of "Hamlet," we are catching glimpses of Shakespeare at work, Shakespeare hovering over the text and fine-tuning: Shakespeare in rewrite.

The Arden declaration that all "Hamlet" must be divided into three parts is likely to set off a new round of "Hamlet" wars. But the upheaval will produce more than scholarly fratricide; it will give all of us a new lens with which to look at the play. The conflicts are not just about the texts but about what "Hamlet" means and who Hamlet is.

The advent of the edition will make it dramatically clear that to read "Hamlet" is to make a choice between "Hamlet"s. There is, so to speak, no longer a default "Hamlet." Readers must decide which fork in the textual maze to take, becoming, in effect, their own directors. The new "Hamlet" is likely to introduce an era in which the mysteries of "Hamlet" are renewed—in which the play is experienced again, not as an ossified cultural monument, a compendium of famous quotations, but as a drama that must be constructed by the reader.

It may inspire some readers to go deeper into the play. It is likely to excite echoes and ripples in the expanding cosmos of the "Hamlet" variorum, that record of the love and madness of "Hamlet" scholars. Indeed, it may be no accident that so many of the variant "Hamlet" passages that offer traces suggestive of Shakespeare's revising hand involve meditations on the extremities of love and madness. The inspired obsessiveness of "Hamlet" scholars has deepened our sense of the play's inexhaustible mysteries. Hamlet's last words may be "The rest is silence." But "Hamlet" continues to speak. ♦

FICTION

# THE FRUIT CAGE

BY JULIAN BARNES



When I was thirteen, I discovered a tube of contraceptive jelly in the bathroom cabinet. Despite a generalized suspicion that anything concealed from me was probably related to lust, I failed to recognize the purpose of this battered tube. Some ointment for eczema, hair loss, middle-age spread, I assumed. Then the small print told me what I didn't want to know. My parents still did it. Worse, when they did it there was still a chance that my mum might get pregnant. This was, well, inconceivable. I was thirteen, my sister seventeen. Perhaps the tube was very, very old. I squeezed tentatively, and it softly yielded to my thumb. I touched the cap, which appeared to unscrew with lubricious speed. I must have squeezed again, as guck squirted into my other palm.

Fancy my mother doing that to herself, whatever "that" might involve, since this did not seem to comprise the full kit. I sniffed the petroly gel. Somewhere between a doctor's surgery and a garage, I thought. Revolting.

This happened more than thirty years ago. I had forgotten it until today.

I have known my parents all my life. That must seem a statement of the obvious, I realize. Let me explain. As a child I felt loved and protected, and therefore responded with a normal belief in the indissolubility of the parental tie. Adolescence brought the usual boredom and false maturity, but no more than for anyone else. I left home without trauma, and was never out of touch for long. I provided grand-

children, one of each sex, thereby making up for my sister's devotion to her career. Later, I had responsible conversations with my parents—well, with my mother—about the realities of aging and the practicality of bungalows. I organized a sitdown lunch for their fortieth wedding anniversary, inspected sheltered housing, discussed their wills. Ma even told me what she wanted done with their ashes. I was to take the caskets to a cliff top on the Isle of Wight where, I deduced, they had first declared their love for each other. Those present were to cast their dust to the wind and the seagulls. I already found myself worrying about what I was to do with the caskets afterward. You couldn't exactly toss them off the cliff after the ashes; nor could you keep them for stor-

TONY RAYJONES "BOURNEMOUTH" (1969)/NMPF/SSPI



ing, I don't know, cigars or chocolate biscuits or Christmas decorations. And you certainly couldn't stuff them into some wastebin at the car park, which my mother had thoughtfully circled on the Ordnance Survey map. She had pressed it on me when my father was out of the room and would occasionally confirm that I was keeping it in a safe place.

Known them, you see. All my life.

**M**y mother is called Dorothy Mary Bishop, and her maiden name was Heathcock, which she gave up with no regret. My father is Stanley George Bishop. She was born in 1921, he in 1920. They grew up in different parts of the West Midlands, settled on the rural fringes of London, and retired to the Essex-Suffolk border. Their lives were orderly. During the war, my mother worked in the county surveyor's office; my father was in the R.A.F. No, he wasn't a fighter pilot or anything; his talent was for administration. Afterward, he joined the local authority, eventually becoming deputy chief executive. He liked to say that he was responsible for everything we took for granted. Essential but unappreciated: my father was an ironical man, and this is how he chose to present himself.

Childhood comes back in smells. Porridge, custard, my father's pipe; washing powder, Brasso, my mother's scent before the Masonic dinner dance; bacon through the floorboards as I lay in bed; Seville oranges boiling volcanically while there was still frost on the ground outside; drying mud entwined with grass on football boots; bog pongs from previous users and kitchen pongs from backfiring waste pipes; the aging leather seats of our Morris Minor; and the acrid slack my father shovelled on the fire to bank it up. All these smells recurred, as did the unchanging cycles of school, weather, garden growth, and domesticity. The first scarlet break of runner-bean flowers; folded vests in my bottom drawer; mothballs; the gas poker. On Mondays, the house would throb to our washing machine, which used to crab itself berserkly across the kitchen floor, howling and bucking, sending gallons of hot, gray water along its fat beige tubes to spit and gush into the sink. The manufacturer's name on its metal badge

was Thor. The god of thunder sat and growled in the outer reaches of suburbia.

**I** suppose I should try to give you some idea of my parents' characters.

People used to assume, I think, that my mother had more natural intelligence than my father. He was—is—a large man, fleshy and bellied, with bunched veins corrugating the backs of his hands. He used to say that he had heavy bones. I didn't know the weight of bones could vary. Perhaps it can't; perhaps this was just something he said to amuse us kids, or to perplex us. He could seem ponderous, as his thick fingers paused over a checkbook, as he rewired a plug with the D.I.Y. book open in front of him. But children quite like one parent to be slow: the adult world then seems less impossible. My father used to take me up to the Great Wen, as he called it, to buy model-aircraft kits (more smells: balsa wood, colored dope, metal knives). In those days, a return ticket on the Underground was marked with a perforation, the portion for the outward journey occupied two-thirds of the ticket, the return one-third—a division whose logic I could never see. Anyway, my father would pause as we approached the barrier at Oxford Circus and look down at the tickets in his large palm with a gentle puzzlement. I would peck them nimbly off his hand, tear them down the perforations, drop the return thirds back into his palm, and swaggeringly present the outward portions to the ticket collector. I was nine or ten at the time, and pleased with my sleight of finger; years on, I wonder if, after all, he was bluffing.

My mother was the organizer. Though my father spent his life making sure that the borough ran smoothly, when he closed the front door he submitted to another's system of control. My mother bought his clothes, arranged their social life, oversaw our schooling, budgeted, made decisions about holidays. To third parties, my father used to refer to his wife as "the Government" or "the higher authority." My mother could trim the crusts from sandwiches without losing any of the filling: a sweet harmony between palm and knife. She sometimes had a tongue on her, which I attributed to the accumulated frustrations of housewifery, but she was also proud of her do-

mestic talents. When she badgered my father and he told her not to nag, she would reply, "Men only use the word 'nag' when it's something they don't want to do." Most days they gardened. Together, they had built a fruit cage: poles with rubber balls at their junctions, an acre of netting, and reinforced defenses against birds, squirrels, rabbits, and moles. Sunken beer traps caught the slugs. After tea, they played Scrabble; after dinner, they did the crossword; then they watched the news. An orderly life.

Six years ago, I noticed a large bruise on the side of my father's head, just above the temple. It was yellowing at the edges and still indigo at the center.

"What have you done to yourself, Dad?" We were standing in the kitchen at the time. My mother had opened a bottle of sherry and was tying a piece of paper towel round the neck so that it wouldn't drip if my father poured it less than immaculately. I used to wonder why she didn't pour it herself and save the paper towel.

"He had a fall, silly old thing." My mother pulled the knot tight with exactly the right strength, for she, more than anyone, knew how paper towel will rip if tied too fiercely.

"Are you O.K., Dad?"

"Right as rain. Ask the Government."

Later, when my mother was washing up and the two of us were watching afternoon snooker on the telly, I said, "How did you do it, Dad?"

"Had a fall," he answered, not taking his eyes from the screen. "Ha! Knew he'd go in-off. What do these young lads know about the game? All potting with them, isn't it? No safety skills at all."

After tea, I watched while my mother won at Scrabble, as she usually did. But something about the way my father played, sighing as if fate had dealt him letters that just couldn't live with one another, made me suspect he wasn't trying.

**I** suppose I'd better tell you about the village. In truth, it's more of a crossroads, where a hundred or so people live in formal proximity to one another. There's a triangular green bitten into by negligent motorists; a village hall; a deconsecrated church; a concrete bus shelter; a postbox with an ungenerous mouth. My mother says that the village shop is "good for essentials," which

means that people use it to stop it closing down. As for my parents' bungalow, it's spacious and characterless. Timber-framed, concrete-floored, double-glazed: chalet style, the estate agents term it—in other words, there's a pitched roof that encloses a large storage space for rusting golf clubs and discarded electric blankets. The only convincing reason my mother ever gave for living here is that three miles away there is a very good freezer center.

Three miles in the opposite direction is a shabby British Legion club. My father used to drive over there at lunchtime on Wednesdays "to get out of the hair of the higher authority." A sandwich, a pint of mild-and-bitter, a game of billiards with whoever happened to be there, then back around teatime with his clothes smelling of cigarette smoke. He kept his Legion "uniform"—a brown tweed jacket with leather elbows and a pair of buff cavalry twills—on a hanger in the utility room. This Wednesday routine had been approved, perhaps even decided on, by my mother. She maintained that my father preferred billiards to snooker because there were fewer balls on the table and so he didn't have to think as much. When I asked my father why he preferred billiards to snooker, he did not reply that billiards was a gentleman's game, or that it was more subtle or more elegant. He said, "Billiards doesn't have to end. A game of billiards could last forever, even if

you were losing all the time. I don't like things to end."

My father rarely spoke this way. Normally he would talk with a sort of smiling complicity. His use of irony prevented him from seeming deferential, but also from seeming entirely serious. Our way of conversing was long-established: companionable, chummy, oblique, warm, yet essentially distant. English, oh, yes, it's English, by Christ, it's English. In my family, we don't do hugging and backslapping; we don't do sentimentality. Rites of passage: we get our certificates for those by mail order.

I probably sound as if I were favoring my father. I don't want to make my mother seem sharp, or humorless. Well, she can be sharp, it's true. And humorless, for that matter. There's a nervous trimness about her: even in middle age she never put on weight. And, as she likes to repeat, she never did suffer fools gladly.

When my parents first moved to the village they met the Royces. Jim Royce was their doctor, one of the old-fashioned sort. He drank and smoked and went on saying that pleasure never did anyone any harm until the day he dropped dead of a heart attack while still short of the average male life expectancy. His first wife had died of cancer, and Jim had remarried within the year. Elsie was an outgoing, bosomy woman a few years his junior, who wore characterful

spectacles and, as she put it, "liked a bit of a dance." My mother referred to her as "Joyce Royce" and, long after it had been established that Elsie's previous life had been spent keeping house for her parents in Bishop's Stortford, used to maintain that she had really been Jim Royce's receptionist and had blackmailed him into marriage.

"You know that isn't the case," my father would sometimes protest.

"I don't know that it isn't. Neither do you. She probably poisoned the first Mrs. Royce to get her hooks into him."

"Well, I think she's a good-hearted woman." Faced with my mother's eye and silence, he added, "Maybe a little boring."

"Boring? Like watching the test card. Except it's going *yack yack yack* at you all the time. And that hair comes out of a bottle."

"Does it?" My father was visibly surprised by this allegation.

"Oh, you men. Do you think that that color exists in nature?"

"I never thought about it." Dad was quiet for a while.

Uncharacteristically, my mother kept him company, then finally she said, "And now that you have?"

"Have what?"

"Thought about it. Joyce Royce's hair."

"Oh. No, I was thinking of something else."

"And are you going to share the benefit with the rest of the human race?"

"I was wondering how many 'U's there are in Scrabble."

"Men," my mother replied. "There's only an 'A' and an 'E,' clothead."

My father smiled at this. You see how they were together?

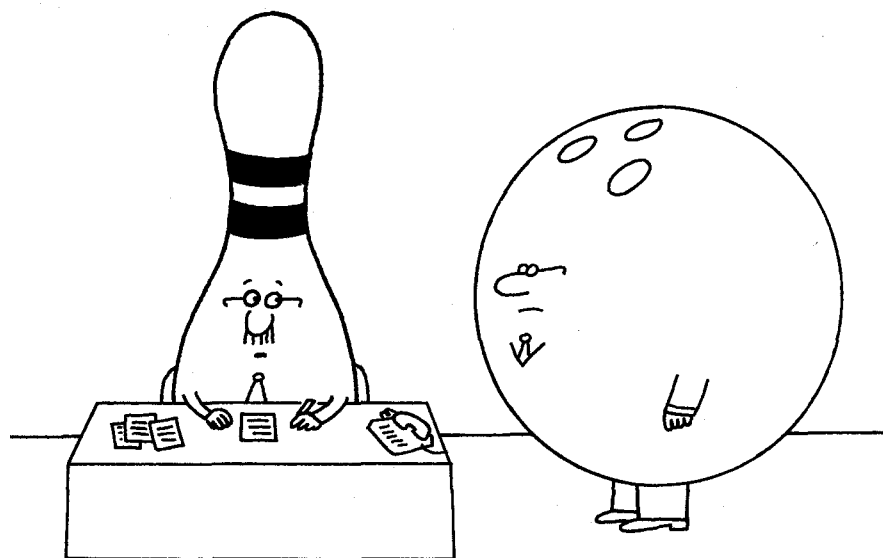
I asked my father how the car was running. He was seventy-eight at the time, and I wondered how much longer they would let him drive.

"Engine's running well. Bodywork's not too good. Chassis's rusting."

"And how are you, Dad?" I had been trying to avoid the direct question, but somehow failed.

"Engine's running well. Bodywork's not too good. Chassis's rusting."

Now he lies in bed, sometimes in his own green striped pajamas, more often in a poorly fitting pair inherited from



C. Barnett

"Don't say it—I'll clean out my desk."



someone else—someone dead, perhaps. He winks at me as he always did and calls people “dear.” He says, “My wife, you know. Many happy years.”

My mother would talk practically of the Four Last Things. That’s to say, the Four Last Things of modern life: making a will, planning for old age, facing death, and not being able to believe in an afterlife. My father was finally prevailed upon to make a will when he was over sixty. My mother was garrulous about decrepitude, and not shy of mentioning death. My father never referred to it, at least not in my hearing. As for the afterlife: on the rare occasions that we entered a church as a family (only for a marriage, a baptism, or a funeral), he would kneel for a few moments with his fingers pressed to his forehead. Was this prayer, some secular equivalent, or just a leftover habit from childhood? Perhaps it showed courtesy, or an open mind? My mother’s attitude toward the mysteries of the spirit was less ambiguous: “Poppycock.” “Load of mumbo-jumbo.” “Not having any of that done over me, you understand, Chris?” What I ask myself is, Behind all that reticence and smiling, behind the jokey kowtowing to my mother, behind the evasions—or, if you prefer, good manners—in the face of the Four Last Things, did my father feel panic and mortal terror? Or is that a stupid question? Is anyone spared mortal terror?

After Jim Royce died, Elsie attempted to keep up with my parents. There were invitations to tea, and to sherry, and to view the garden, but my mother always declined.

“We only put up with her because we liked him,” she said.

“Oh, she’s pleasant enough,” my father would reply. “There’s no harm in her.”

“There’s no harm in a bag of peat. Doesn’t mean you have to go round and have a glass of sherry with it. Anyway, she’s got what she wants.”

“What’s that?”

“His pension. She’ll be comfortable now. Doesn’t need Muggins here to help her pass the time of day.”

“Jim would have liked us to keep in touch.”

“Jim’s well out of it. You should have

seen the expression on his face when she got yacking. You could *hear* his mind wandering.”

“I thought they were very fond.”

“So much for your powers of observation.”

My father gave me a wink.

“What are you winking at?”

“Winking? Me? Would I do such a thing?” My father turned his head another ten degrees and winked again.

What I’m trying to get a line on is this: part of my father’s behavior was always to deny his behavior. Does that make sense?

The discovery was made like this. It was a question of bulbs. A friend in a neighboring village offered to pass on some surplus narcissi. My mother said that my father would pick them up on his way back from the British Legion. She rang the club and asked to speak to my father. The secretary said that he wasn’t there. When someone gives my mother an answer she isn’t expecting, she tends to ascribe it to the stupidity of her interlocutor.

“He’s playing billiards,” she said.

“No, he isn’t.”

“Don’t be a clothead,” my mother said, and I can imagine her tone all too well. “He always plays billiards on a Wednesday afternoon.”

“Madam” is what she heard next. “I have been secretary of this club for the past twenty years, and in all that time billiards has never been played on a Wednesday afternoon. Monday, Tuesday, Friday, yes. Wednesday, no. Do I make myself clear?”

My mother was eighty when she had this conversation; my father was eighty-one.

“You come and talk some sense into him. He’s going gaga. I’d like to strangle the bitch.” And there I was again. Me, and not my sister. But it wasn’t wills, this time, or power of attorney, or sheltered housing.

My mother had that high nervous energy that crises bring: a mixture of anxious fizz and underlying exhaustion, each of which fuels the other. “He won’t listen to reason. He won’t listen to anything. I’m going to prune the black currants.”

My father moved swiftly out of his chair. We shook hands, as we always

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do. "I'm glad you've come," he said. "Your mother won't listen to reason."

"I'm not the voice of reason," I said. "So don't expect too much."

"I don't expect anything. Just glad to see you." Such a rare expression of direct pleasure from my father alarmed me. So did the way he sat foursquare in his chair; normally he was aslant, or askance, like his eyes and his mind. "Your mother and I are separating. I'm going to live with Elsie. We'll split the furniture and divide the bank balance. She can live in this place, which I must tell you I've never much liked, for as long as she wants to. Of course, half of it's mine, so if she wanted to move she'd have to find somewhere smaller. She could have the car if she knew how to drive, but I doubt that's a viable option."

"Dad, how long has this been going on?"

He looked at me without a blink or a blush and shook his head faintly. "I'm afraid that's none of your business."

"Of course it is, Dad. I'm your son."

"True. Perhaps you're wondering if I'm going to make a new will. I'm not planning to. Not at the moment. All that's happening is I'm going to live with Elsie. I'm not divorcing your mother or anything like that. I'm just going to live with Elsie." The way he pronounced her name made me realize that my task—or, at least, the task my mother had proposed—was not going to succeed. There was no guilty hesitation or false emphasis when he spoke her name: "Elsie" sounded as solid as flesh.

"What would Mum do without you?"

"Paddle her own canoe." He didn't say it harshly, just with a crispness implying that he'd already worked everything out and that others would agree if only they gave it enough thought. "She can be a government of one."

My father had never shocked me, though once, through the window, I'd seen him wringing the neck of a black-bird he'd caught in the fruit cage. He was swearing, too. Then he'd tied the bird upside down to the netting to discourage other looters.

We talked some more. Or, rather, I talked, and my father listened as if I were one of those kids who come to the door with a sports bag full of dusters, chamois leathers, and ironing-board covers, the purchase of which, their spiel

hints, will keep them from a life of crime. By the end, I knew how they felt when I closed the door in their faces. My father had listened politely while I praised the articles in my bag, but he didn't want to buy. Finally, I said, "But you will think it over, Dad? Give it a bit of time?"

"If I give it a bit of time, I'll be dead."

There'd been a kindly distance to our dealings ever since I became an adult; things were left unsaid, but an amiable equality presided. Now there was a new gulf between us. Or perhaps it was the old one: my father had become a parent again, and was reasserting his greater knowledge of the world.

"Dad, none of my business and all that, but is it . . . physical?"

He looked at me with those clear gray-blue eyes, not reproachfully, just steadily. If one of us was going to blush, it was me. "It is none of your business, Chris. But, since you ask, the answer is yes."

"And . . . ?" I couldn't go on. My father wasn't some middle-aged friend drooling over totty; he was my eighty-one-year-old progenitor, who after fifty or so years of marriage was leaving home for a woman somewhere in her mid-sixties. I was afraid even to formulate the questions.

"But . . . why now? I mean, if it's been going on all these years."

"All what years?"

"All the years you're supposed to have been down the club playing billiards."

"I mostly was down the club, son. I said billiards to make things simpler. Sometimes I just sat in the car. Looking at a field. No, Elsie . . . is recent."

Later, I dried the dishes for my mother. As she handed me a Pyrex casserole lid, she said, "I expect he's using that stuff."

"What stuff?"

"You know. That stuff." I put the

lid down and held my hand out for a saucepan. "It's in the papers. Rhymes with Niagara."

"Ah." One of the easier crossword clues.

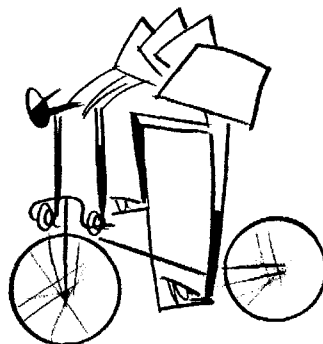
"They say all over America old men are running around like buck rabbits." I tried not to think of my father as a buck rabbit. "All men are fools, Chris, and they only change by getting more foolish with each year that passes. I wish I'd paddled my own canoe."

Later, in the bathroom, I opened the mirrored door of a corner cupboard and peered in. Hemorrhoid cream, shampoo for delicate hair, cotton wool, a mail-order copper bracelet against arthritis . . . Don't be ridiculous, I thought. Not here, not now, not my father.

At first I thought, He's just another case, just another man tempted away by ego, novelty, sex. The age thing makes it seem different, but it isn't, really. It's ordinary, banal, tacky.

Then I thought, What do I know? Why make the assumption that my parents don't—didn't—have sex anymore? They had shared the same bed until this happened. What do I know about sex at their age? So I was left with the question: Which is worse for my mother—to give up sex at, let's say, sixty-five, and discover fifteen years later that your husband is off with a woman of the age you were when you gave it up, or still to be having sex with your husband after half a century, only to discover that he's having a bit on the side?

And after that I thought, What if it isn't really about sex? Would I have been less squeamish if my father had said, "No, son, it isn't physical at all, it's just that I've fallen in love." The question I'd asked, which had seemed hard enough at the time, was actually the easier one. Why make the assumption that the heart shuts down alongside the genitals? Because we want—need—to see old age as a time of serenity? I now think that this is one of the great conspiracies of youth. Not just of youth but of middle age, too, of every single year until that moment when we admit to being old ourselves. And it's a wider conspiracy because the old collude in our belief. They sit there with a rug over their knees, nodding subserviently and agreeing that their revels now are ended. The





fires have gone out—or, at least, a shovelful of slack has been piled on for the long night ahead. But now my father was declining to play the game.

I didn't tell my parents that I was going to see Elsie.

"Yes?" She stood at the reeded-glass door, arms crossed beneath her bosom, head high, absurd spectacles glinting in the sun. Her hair was the color of autumnal beech and, as I now saw, thinning at the crown. Her cheeks were powdered but not enough to camouflage the occasional starburst of capillaries.

"Could we have a talk? I... My parents don't know I'm here."

She turned without a word, and I followed her seamed stockings along a narrow hall to the lounge. Her bungalow was laid out in exactly the same way as my parents': kitchen on the right, two bedrooms straight ahead, utility room next to the bathroom, lounge to the left. Perhaps the same builder had put them both up. Perhaps all bungalows are much the same. I'm no expert.

She sat on a low black leather chair and instantly lit a cigarette. "I warn you, I'm too old to be lectured." She was wearing a brown skirt and a cream blouse, and large display earrings in the shape of snail shells. I had met her twice before, and had been reasonably bored by her. No doubt she was by me, too. Now I sat opposite, refused a cigarette, tried to view her as a temptress, a home wrecker, a village scandal, but saw instead a woman in her mid-sixties, plump, slightly nervous, more than slightly hostile. Not a temptress—and not a version of my mother, either.

"I haven't come to lecture you. I suppose I'm trying to understand."

"What's there to understand? Your father's coming to live with me." She took an irritated puff at her cigarette, then snatched it from her mouth. "He'd be here now if he wasn't such a nice man. Said he had to let you all get used to the idea."

"They've been married a very long time," I said, in as neutral a tone as I could manage.

"You don't leave what you still want," Elsie said curtly. She took another quick puff and looked at the cigarette in half-disapproval. Her ashtray was suspended over the arm of her chair by a leather

strap with weights at each end. I wanted it to be stuffed full of butts louchely smeared with scarlet lipstick. I wanted to see scarlet fingernails and scarlet toenails. But her extremities were undecorated. On her left ankle she wore a support sock. What did I know about her? That she had looked after her parents, had looked after Jim Royce, and was now proposing—or so I assumed—to look after my father. Her lounge contained a large number of African violets planted in yogurt pots, an excess of plumped cushions, a couple of stuffed animals, a cocktail-cabinet telly, a pile of gardening magazines, a cluster of family photos, a built-in electric fire. None of it would have been amiss in my parents' house.

"African violets," I said.

"Thank you." She seemed to be waiting for me to say something that would give her grounds for attack. I stayed silent, and it made no difference. "Shouldn't hit him, should she?"

"What?"

"Shouldn't hit him, should she? Not if she wants to keep him."

"Don't be ridiculous."

"Frying pan. Side of the head. Six years ago, wasn't it? Jim always had his suspicions. And quite a few times recently. Not where it shows—she's learned that lesson. Whacks him in the back. Senile dementia, if you ask me. Ought to be put away."

"Who told you this?"

"Well, *she* didn't." Elsie glared at me and lit another cigarette.

"My mother..."

"Believe what you want to believe." She certainly wasn't trying to ingratiate herself. But why should she? It wasn't an audition. As she showed me out, I automatically put out my hand. She shook it briefly, and repeated, "You don't leave what you still want."

When I got back to my parents' house, I felt a sudden depression, as if it were I who lived in the village and had already grown weary of this jumped-up crossroads with its dead church, brutal bus shelter, chalet-style bungalows, and overpriced shop that was good for essentials. I maneuvered my car onto the strip of asphalt exaggeratedly known as the drive, and could see, at the end of the garden, my fa-

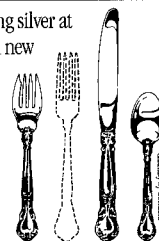
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*"Starting Monday, this radio station will switch from classical music to hard-core rap."*

ther at work in the fruit cage, bending and tying. My mother was waiting for me.

I said, "Mum, have you ever hit Dad?"

She traced my source instantly. "Is that what the bitch says? You can tell her from me I'll see her in court. She should be . . . covered in tar and feathers, whatever they do."

I didn't respond.

"Joyce Bloody Royce. Well, they deserve each other. Pair of dimwits. Of course, this poisons the whole of my life."

"Oh, come off it, Mum."

"Don't you 'Come off it' to me, young man. Not until you're my age. Then you'll have earned the right. It poisons the whole of my life." She would allow no contradiction; she, too, was reasserting herself as a parent.

I poured myself a cup of tea from the pot by the sink.

"It's stewed."

"I don't care."

Ponderous silence ensued. Once

again, I felt like a child seeking approval, or, at any rate, trying to avoid censure.

"Do you remember the Thor, Mum?" I suddenly found myself saying.

"The what?"

"The Thor. When we were kids. The way it used to travel all over the kitchen floor. Had a mind of its own. And it was always flooding, wasn't it?"

"I thought that was the Hotpoint."

"No." I felt oddly desperate about this. "You had the Hotpoint afterward. The Thor was the one I remember. Made a lot of rattling and had those thick creamy hoses for the water."

"That tea must be undrinkable," my mother said. "And, by the way, send me back that map I gave you. No, just chuck it away. Isle of Wight, clothhead. Mumbo-jumbo. Understand?"

"Yes, Ma."

"What I want, if I go before your father, as I expect I shall, is just scatter me. Anywhere. Or get the crem to do it. You're not obliged to collect the ashes, you know."

"I wish you wouldn't talk like this."

"He'll see me out. It's a creaking gate that lasts the longest. Then the Receptionist can have his ashes, can't she?"

"Don't talk like that."

"Put them on her mantelpiece."

"Look, Ma, if that happened, I mean, if you died before Dad, she wouldn't have the right, anyway. It'd be up to me, me and Karen. It wouldn't have anything to do with Elsie."

My mother stiffened at the name. "Karen's a dead loss, and I couldn't trust you, son, could I?"

"Ma . . ."

"Sneaking round to her house without telling me. Chip off the old block, you are. Always were your father's son."

According to Elsie, my mother blighted their life with her constant phone calls. "Morning, noon, and night, especially night. In the end, we just took the plug out." According to Elsie, my mother was always making my father pop back and do jobs around the house. She used a succession of arguments. One, the house was half his anyway, so he had a duty to maintain it. Two, he'd left her without enough money to employ a handyman. Three, he presumably didn't expect her to start going up a ladder at her age. Four, if he didn't come at once she'd walk all the way to Elsie's house and fetch him.

According to my mother, my father was back at her door almost as soon as he'd left, offering to fix things, dig the garden, clean the gutters, check the level in the oil tank, anything. According to my mother, my father complained that Elsie treated him like a dog, wouldn't let him go to the British Legion club, had bought him a pair of slippers he particularly disliked, and wanted him to break off all contact with his children. According to my mother, my father begged her constantly to take him back, to which she would reply, "You've made your bed and you can learn to lie in it," though in fact she only intended to make him stick it out a little longer. According to my mother, my father didn't like the slapdash way Elsie ironed his shirts, or the fact that all his clothes now smelled of cigarette smoke.

According to Elsie, my mother made



so much fuss about the back door swelling, so that now the bolt went only halfway in and a burglar could be through that in a jiffy and rape and murder her as she lay in her bed, that my father reluctantly agreed to go over. According to Elsie, my father swore that this was the last time ever, and that as far as he was concerned the whole bloody house could burn to the ground, preferably with my mother inside it, before he would be persuaded to drive over again. According to Elsie, it was while my father was working on the back door that my mother hit him over the head with an unknown instrument, then left him lying there, hoping he would die, and only called the ambulance several hours later.

According to my mother, my father kept pestering her to get the back door fixed and said that he didn't like to think of her there alone at night and the whole matter would be resolved if only she'd let him come back. According to my mother, my father turned up unexpectedly one afternoon with his toolbox. They sat and talked for a couple of hours, about old times, about the children, and even got out some photos, which made them both damp-eyed. She told him that she'd think about having him back but not until he'd fixed the door, if that was what he'd come to do. He went off with his toolbox; she cleared away the tea things, then sat looking at some more photographs. After a while, she realized that she hadn't heard any banging from the utility room. My father was on his side, making a gurgling noise; he must have had another fall and struck his head on the floor, which, of course, is concrete out there. She called an ambulance—God, they were slow in coming—and put a cushion under his head, look, this cushion, you can still see the blood on it.

According to the police, Mrs. Elsie Royce made a complaint to them that Mrs. Dorothy Mary Bishop had assaulted Mr. Stanley George Bishop with intent to murder. They had investigated the matter fully and decided not to proceed. According to the police, Mrs. Bishop made a complaint to them that Mrs. Royce was going about the village denouncing her as a murderer. They had had to have a quiet word with Mrs. Royce. Domestic violence is always

a problem, especially what you might call extended domestics like this one.

My father has now been in the hospital for two months. He recovered consciousness after three days, but since then has made little progress. When he was first admitted, the doctor said to me, "I'm afraid it doesn't take a lot at their age." Now a different doctor has tactfully explained, "It would be a mistake to expect too much." My father is paralyzed down his left side, has severe memory loss and speech impairment, is unable to feed himself, and remains largely incontinent. The left side of his face is twisted like the bark of a tree, but his eyes come out at you as clear and gray-blue as they ever did, and his white hair is always clean and well brushed. I cannot tell how much he understands of what I say. There is one phrase he enunciates well, but otherwise he speaks little. His vowels are contorted, wrung from his slanted mouth, and his eyes express shame at his maimed articulation. Mostly, he prefers silence.

On Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday, asserting her marital right to the fourth day out of seven, my mother visits him. She brings him grapes and the newspaper, and when he dribbles from the left corner of his mouth she pulls a tissue from the box at his bedside and dabs away the spittle. If there is a card from Elsie on the table, she tears it up while he pretends not to notice. She talks to him of their life together, of their children and their shared memories. When she leaves, he follows her with his eyes and says, very clearly, to anyone who will listen, "My wife, you know. Many happy years."

On Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, Elsie visits my father. She brings him flowers and homemade fudge, and when he dribbles she takes from her pocket a white lace-trimmed handkerchief with the initial "E" in red stitching. She wipes his face with obvious tenderness. She has taken to wearing, on the third finger of her right hand, a ring similar to the one she still wears for Jim Royce, on her left. She talks to my father about the future, about how he is going to get better, and the life they will then have together. When she leaves, he follows her with his eyes and says, very clearly, to anyone who will listen, "My wife, you know. Many happy years." ♦

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## THE CRITICS

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*The conquests and canvases of Peggy Guggenheim.*

BY CLAUDIA ROTH PIERPONT

Entering Picasso's studio in Paris, in 1940, Peggy Guggenheim found the Master surrounded by a group of admirers. Her artistic mission for the past several months—to buy a picture a day—was widely known; most artists and dealers, anticipating a German attack, were desperate to sell anything they could before packing or hiding their works and fleeing the city. Léger, Giacometti, Man Ray: all eagerly delivered their work to the gawky American heiress, and few objected to her haggling over price. There were not many buyers, after all. "People even brought me paintings in the morning to bed," Guggenheim reported, "before I rose." She rarely bought on impulse, though, because she knew exactly what she was after. She had a list, compiled by experts, of artists who should be included in a first-class modern collection, and it had not taken her long to acquire a painting or sculpture by almost every one. The great exception, who ignored her pointedly as she hovered in his studio, finally glanced up to inform her that she had arrived at the wrong location. "Madame," Picasso said as he dismissed her, "you will find the lingerie department on the second floor."

Madame did not experience the rebuke as an extraordinary setback. This is not surprising, as she had barely registered the war as a setback to her plans to open a splendid new gallery in Paris. On April 10, 1940, the day after Hitler's troops entered Denmark and Norway, Guggenheim rented an enormous apartment on the Place Vendôme, and she

went so far as to have the little plaster cherubs chopped off the walls and the place suitably repainted for the display of her treasures before, at last, she admitted defeat, just weeks before France did the same. Dangerous weeks, it might be said, for a woman with a prominent Jewish name. By her own account, however, Guggenheim seems to have been disturbed mostly by the French refusal to protect her art: Léger had advised her to ask the Louvre for storage space, but the august museum pronounced her entire collection not worth saving. "A Kandinsky, several Klees and Picabias, a Cubist Braque, a Gris, a Léger," Guggenheim fumed, along with Surrealist paintings by Miró, Max Ernst, Chirico, Tanguy, Dali, Magritte: all this had to find refuge in a friend's barn in the Vichy countryside. She, however, stayed put; she was enjoying the attentions of a new lover, who was himself prevented from leaving Paris, she said, because his wife was too ill to be moved. And so, as the bombing reached the factories on the outer boulevards, and trains filled with refugees in direst need poured into the city, she sat in cafés and drank champagne.

"I can't imagine why I didn't go to the aid of all those unfortunate people," Guggenheim wrote, in a memoir published shortly after the war. "But I just didn't." She dutifully recorded her escape from Paris to the South of France and then on to Lisbon, a trail of rumpled beds and moral quandaries, before she managed to catch a Pan Am Clipper flight to New York in July, 1941. At forty-

two, Guggenheim had been living abroad for nearly twenty years, and she was bringing back with her the chaotically extended family that she had acquired: her ex-husband and their two teen-age children, her ex-husband's soon-to-be ex-wife and their children, and the painter Max Ernst, who counted as family because he was already, in Guggenheim's mind, her husband-to-be. In her memoir, she recounted the reasons that she had fallen in love with Ernst: "because he is so beautiful, because he is such a good painter and because he is so famous."

Despite the book's occasional flush of naïve charm, it is hard to think of another memoir that so determinedly assassinate the character of its author. By the time Guggenheim began writing it, in 1944, her dream of a first-class modern gallery had become a reality, not on the Place Vendôme but over a grocery on West Fifty-seventh Street, and she was presiding over an art world so tumultuously new that no one could have made a list of who the important figures would turn out to be. And yet almost every major artist of mid-twentieth-century America—Pollock, Rothko, Motherwell, Cornell, Nevelson, de Kooning—showed at Guggenheim's Art of This Century, as the gallery was called: it was the place where American art came into its own. With it, Guggenheim achieved a reputation for daring and for an instinctive grasp of talent that not even the publication of her self-mortifying self-appraisal, titled "Out of This Century"—one reviewer called it "Out of My Head"—was fully able to destroy. To complete the job, it seems, we have biographers.

Anton Gill's "Art Lover: A Biography of Peggy Guggenheim" (Harper-Collins; \$29.95) claims that "the jury remains out" on the question of whether Guggenheim had a good eye—as opposed to merely having good advisers—but he has no difficulty in passing judgment on her as a woman. "A mixture of low self-esteem and aggression, aided by money" is how he describes her behavior in his first few pages; "essentially selfish," he continues, and states as categorical "her inability to give anything in return for what she took." According to Gill, Guggenheim was an inadequate friend, an inept wife, and—to cite his most frequent and furious charge—a catastrophic mother. Her "most successful relation-

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*She was nearing forty and sick with a sense of personal failure when a friend suggested that she open an art gallery.*



ships," he writes, "were with animals and works of art," but his book is more informative about Guggenheim's feelings for her Lhasa Apsos than for the talents of Jackson Pollock, to whom she gave his first four one-man shows. Gill's focus is far narrower than that of Guggenheim's previous biographer, Jacqueline Bograd Weld; ironically, his emphasis on the dark and tawdry has resulted in a portrait that is unconvincingly dull. While Gill is effective in capturing Guggenheim's essential pathos, he obscures the vivacity and brio that made her gallery such a personal phenomenon, with Guggenheim herself continually patrolling and touching and talking, or standing at the door and asking people as they left, "What did you think of the paintings?" And then, if they didn't seem to understand what they had seen, adding with a shrug, "Come back again in fifty years."

Nothing less than the war could have brought her back to America. She associated the entire country with her awful childhood; "one long protracted agony" is how she remembered it. Both of her grandfathers—"my stable-born grandfather, Mr. Seligman," and "Mr. Guggenheim the peddler"—had fled the oppression and restrictions of their lives as Jews in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century, arriving in America with no money and no English and nothing

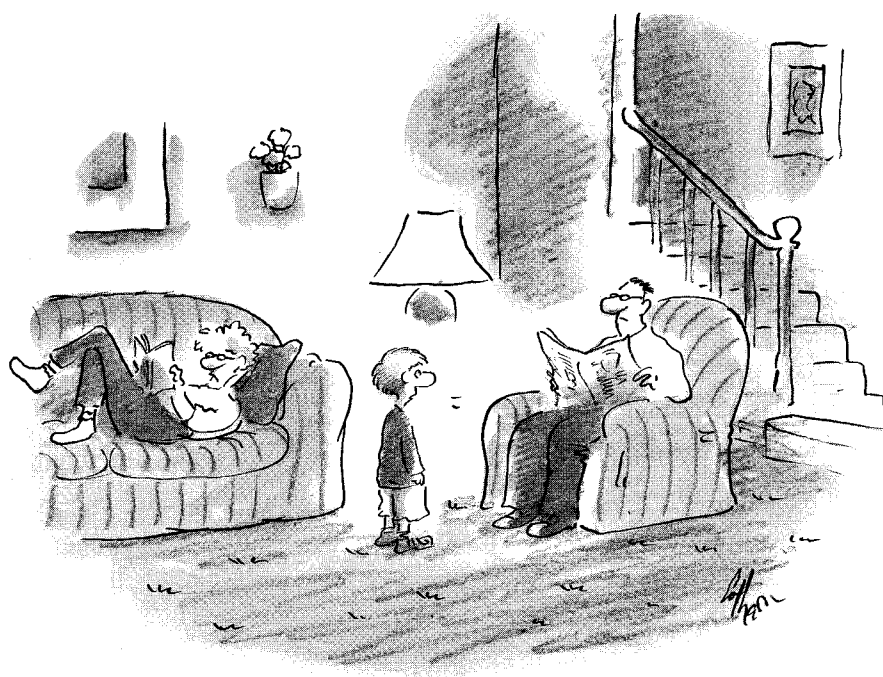
but their explosively unleashed initiative to explain how Mr. Seligman came to found a vast international banking house and Mr. Guggenheim to acquire a large part of the mineral wealth of Colorado. From her birth, in 1898, Peggy Guggenheim—née Marguerite—had a prescribed place in New York's German Jewish aristocracy; the house she grew up in, on East Seventy-second Street, had a Louis XVI parlor, a Louis XV dining table, and a dark servants' stair that gave her nightmares. It was a fairy-tale world, complete with curses. Her adored father spent most of his time away with his mistresses, her mother was addled and wholly distracted, and she was left to the care of vicious nurses who threatened to cut out her tongue, and whose forced outdoor exertions induced in her a lifelong terror of Central Park. Yet her upbringing did not strike her as unusual. "I don't think there were any good mothers in those days," she wrote.

In 1911, Peggy's father, Benjamin Guggenheim, abandoned his family entirely and moved to Paris; in April, 1912, coming back for a visit, he went down on the Titanic. Peggy was nearly fourteen, and she later claimed that she never got over the loss. Seeking emotional ballast, she clung to her beautiful older sister, Benita, who was the first and most constant love of her life, and whose attentions she vied for with her equally beau-

tiful younger sister, Hazel. Yet even this solace was turned to pain by what appeared to be the greatest curse of all, blooming day by day right in the middle of her face: the Guggenheim nose. A potato nose, as her grandfather's was usually called; her version, if on occasion more poetically compared to a sponge or a peony, was viewed as equally outsized and grotesque. As a result, her youth was filled with agonizing attempts at "being beautified," which culminated, in 1920, with a primitive nose job that only made the offending object worse, except insofar as its swellings now allowed her to predict inclement weather.

Guggenheim cites two other sources for the sense of inferiority that plagued her early life: lack of money, and the oppression and restrictions of being a Jew in America. Seeking independence, Benjamin Guggenheim had broken not only with his wife and children but with the economic partnership of his brothers, and his death left his daughters in the position of poor relations until their mother came into her own inheritance; the family moved to smaller quarters and had to cut down on servants. It was during this dismal period that mother and daughters were "politely but firmly" turned out of a hotel in Vermont for being Jewish, in a particularly humiliating but hardly novel display of anti-Semitism. In the town on the New Jersey shore where Guggenheim's various uncles had built vacation homes that included replicas of the Petit Trianon and a Pompeian villa, the nearest hotel would not admit Jews; she reports watching happily as the place burned down one summer. But she reserves her greatest disgust for the family villas themselves, for the Victorian pomp and suffocating closeness of the new ghetto that effectively walled her in.

Guggenheim made a bid for freedom as soon as her father's estate was settled, in 1919 (to greater advantage than anyone had expected), and she inherited four hundred and fifty thousand dollars—a pittance by Guggenheim standards, but enough to allow her to vault the ghetto walls when at last she spied a place to land on the other side. Harold Loeb, Peggy's cousin and the family's artistic rebel, asked her to help keep accounts in a small bookstore that he subsidized, and the experience was a revelation: the discovery of a brave new world



*"You can't send me to bed now—not when events are breaking so fast."*



full of people whom she later recalled as "so real, so alive, so human" precisely because "their values were different from mine." When Loeb moved to Paris the next year to work on a novel, she followed. "I soon knew where every painting in Europe could be found," she wrote, "and I managed to get there, even if I had to spend hours going to a little country town to see only one." She particularly adored Venetian painting, and when an acquaintance told her that the works of Bernard Berenson would be too difficult for her, she read every volume that she could get her hands on.

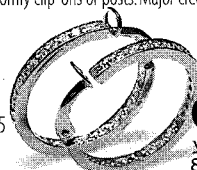
This ravenous intellectual and aesthetic hunger seemed to disappear immediately upon her marriage, at twenty-three, to a dazzling bon vivant and painter named Laurence Vail, an American raised in France, whom she gleefully titled "the King of Bohemia." Artistic, popular, ostentatiously free, and anything but Jewish, the golden-haired Vail was to Guggenheim an enthralling figure, and she guilelessly reports how she pushed him all the way to the altar. (She was so sure he wouldn't show up for the wedding that she didn't buy a dress.) In the same lightly rueful tone, she goes on to detail how during the years of their marriage he would knock her down in the street or "walk" on her stomach or, when he was truly furious, rub jam into her hair. The violence has an absurd, cartoonish quality that keeps the pain from seeming real, unlike the pain of the King of Bohemia's frequent reminders that his wife possessed neither the beauty of a consort nor the artistic talents of a rightful citizen, and that, as Guggenheim sums up his argument, "all I had to offer was my money," upon which he graciously consented to live.

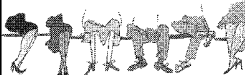
Bohemia is a cruel country. Unprotected by the bourgeois rules of polite behavior that she had so gladly left behind, Guggenheim appears to have borne the insults and humiliations of her new society with a kind of perverse pride, even when they were no different from those she had always known. She mildly notes that when, at a party in Paris, Man Ray's mistress, Kiki, called him a "dirty Jew" it was her mother, visiting after the birth of the Vails' first child, who was "outraged" and "told Kiki what she thought of her." Guggenheim herself offered no response. Bohemia does not seem to have been

tarnished for her even after Harold Loeb was brutally caricatured by his friend Ernest Hemingway in "The Sun Also Rises," in 1926, as the pitifully overeager and despicably Jewish character Robert Cohn, whose most memorable trait is his ability to withstand any amount of verbal abuse without complaint. But then, in the same year, Laurence Vail completed a novel of his own—"Murder! Murder!"—which, as Gill points out, contains a stunningly anti-Semitic portrait of the author's barely disguised wife, who moves her lips in her sleep "as she dreams of sums." Guggenheim reported that she "took offense" at the original manuscript, which Vail rewrote; but this only suggests how much worse the book must once have been.

Populated largely by adults who were fleeing the responsibilities of adulthood, bohemia supplied new justifications for the same old failures of parenthood that Guggenheim had endured herself: the Vails' son and daughter, Sindbad and Pegeen, seem to have suffered from a more or less benign neglect even before their mother ran off with another man. In the late twenties, the perils of motherhood for all the Guggenheim sisters became chillingly clear. Benita, after several attempts to have a baby, died in childbirth in 1927, and Guggenheim writes that it was her death—"I felt virtually as though I had been cut in two"—coupled with her husband's heartless attitude to the loss, that brought her marriage to an end. About her own children, she suddenly felt that she "had no right to have any," a comment that may shed light on the single incident that even she found too disturbing to recount in her book: the death of her sister Hazel's two small sons, who plunged from their mother's grasp and off a rooftop in New York the following year. The fact that Hazel was not charged with murder was widely assumed to be a result of the family's legal interference. Yet Guggenheim writes of 1928 simply as the year in which she fell madly in love with a brilliant alcoholic writer whose affectionate nickname for her was Dog Nose. The privilege of going off with this man meant that she had to give up one of her children, as she saw it, in order to be fair to her husband, and she chose to keep the girl, a sad-eyed three-year-old flaxen-haired waif. Guggenheim

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later wrote that the intensity of her longing for her son, who was five, nearly destroyed the new relationship, but by then there was no way back.

Guggenheim spent the next decade of her life administering first to the needs of the alcoholic writer, and then to the unfaithful Communist who eventually took his place (for his sake, she joined the Party). She was nearing forty and sick with a sense of personal failure when a friend suggested that she open an art gallery as a diversion from suffering over men. She acted quickly: aided by half a million dollars that she inherited on her mother's death, in 1937, and closely guided by Marcel Duchamp, she opened Guggenheim Jeune in London in early 1938. And her thwarted needs and passions suddenly found an open course. "I fell so in love with it," Guggenheim wrote of a small rounded brass sculpture by Jean Arp. "The instant I felt it I wanted to own it."

Arp's "Head and Shell" was the first work to enter her collection, but the balance between what might be termed Guggenheim's dual expressive outlets was notably unstable: for the next year and a half, she became known for exhibiting the most avant-garde artists, but even better known for having affairs with as many of them as she could. Only now did her legendary sexual career begin—legendary because she herself proudly made it so, detailing conquests that ranged from the Surrealist master Yves Tanguy to the young Samuel Beckett, who whenever she asked what he planned to do about their relationship invariably replied, "Nothing." By the time she closed the gallery, after two seasons, in June, 1939, she had lost a good deal of money and gained a Don Giovanni-like list of names. But it was a pair of men who would never make it onto her list—the critic Clement Greenberg, who claimed to be the only heterosexual man in their circle excluded from its pages; and Jackson Pollock, who reputedly said that you'd have to put a towel over Peggy's head to fuck her—who changed the meaning of her life.

In the early forties, New York was just awakening to the political turn that art had taken abroad. The city was filled with refugee artists—Tanguy, Mondrian, Dali, Léger, Breton—and although Hitler's ban on artistic forms that departed

from nature had lent a near-heroic stature to their efforts in Europe, in New York modern art had become mired in the category of fashion. Salvador Dali had supplied his Surrealistic services for the windows of Bonwit Teller, and Guggenheim announced that the Museum of Modern Art had the look of a millionaires' yacht club and the atmosphere of a girls' college. Although hardly a practitioner of political thought, Guggenheim was not above using politics to serve her purpose. "With regard to Surrealism," she replied to a negative review of her gallery by no less a figure than Klaus Mann, "he seems to be in perfect accord with Hitler."

The general response to Guggenheim's Art of This Century, however, was a kind of boggled delight. The gallery, which opened in October, 1942—and also served as a museum for her collection—was designed by the émigré architect Frederick Kiesler as a series of dreamlike theatrical spaces. Surrealist paintings were shown in a black cave of a room, projecting at angles on what appeared to be sawed-off baseball bats—a "faintly menacing" effect, the *Times* pronounced; abstract and Cubist works hovered on weblike cables above a floor painted brilliant turquoise (Guggenheim's favorite color). At the opening, Guggenheim wore one earring by Tanguy and one by Calder, to display her professional impartiality between the Surrealist and abstract modes. Personally, this was something of a misrepresentation. From the time she succeeded in bullying the broke and miserable Max Ernst into marriage, in December, 1941—"I don't know if he was miserable because he was going to marry me or some other reason"—she did everything that she could to support his brand of delicately mannered Surrealism; Ernst's unhappy former dealer, Julien Levy, implied that she'd thought up the gallery and the marriage as a package deal. But Ernst left her after hardly more than a year for the beautiful young painter Dorothea

Tanning. His speedy departure, a terrible blow to Guggenheim's overtaxed heart and ego, happened to coincide with an argument she had over money with his fellow-Surrealist André Breton. It was as a result of these highly untheoretical developments that one sophisticated European style fell out of favor in New York's most adventurous art establishment, and American painting had room to come into its own.

Jackson Pollock's name was misspelled the first time he showed one of his works at Guggenheim's gallery, in early 1943; by the time of the Spring Salon she had got it right. The critical response was favorable, and, in an unusual arrangement, Guggenheim offered to pay Pollock a hundred and fifty dollars a month to quit the custodial job he held at her Uncle Solomon's museum and do nothing but paint, in preparation for a one-man show that fall; in exchange, his paintings were hers to sell, if she could. Clement Greenberg, who had recently shifted his intellectual focus from Marx to Mondrian, was away in the Army for most of the year, and played no direct part in these early events. Shortly before he was inducted, Greenberg had written approvingly of Guggenheim's collection and of the new energies of abstract painting, but he had made, as yet, no absolute case for the sort of art that she showed. It was Greenberg's experience in the Army that ultimately altered his perceptions of the significance of abstraction, and altered the history of American art.

If Guggenheim had glided through wartime Europe with barely a nod to the political realities of being a Jew, Greenberg was overwhelmed by these realities in a mere eight months of service mostly spent in Oklahoma. Visiting a German P.O.W. camp there, he reported that the ranks of confident young men going about their self-appointed exercises in preparation for Hitler's victory shook him terribly; he later described 1943 as the year that he began, as a Jew, to feel physical fear. Back in New York that autumn, he started writing about both art and literature from an increasingly personal and often explicitly Jewish point of view. A long article on Sholom Aleichem as "the Jewish Dickens" quickly veers from literature to the essential virtues of the Jews, including their "examining and





comparing intellect"—a quality that, by early 1944, Greenberg was insisting on as "a Jewish bias toward the abstract."

Greenberg did not apply his notion of this essentially Jewish bias to the art of painting; but then Hitler had done that already. Instead, over the next few years he turned the Nazi equation of abstraction with Jewish decadence on its head, arguing that a new sort of art was emerging in New York City that was fully representative of the principles that had to win the war: positive in spirit, heroic in scale, free, imaginative, and unquestionably American. Guggenheim, who had not wanted to come home at all, was now very nearly cast as a patriot, and her personal escape into art began to take on the force of a campaign for the Stars and Stripes.

Greenberg expressed some reservations in his review of Jackson Pollock's first one-man show, at Guggenheim's gallery, in November, 1943, but he also compared the Wyoming-born thirty-one-year-old painter to Melville, Hawthorne, and Poe. Greenberg later recalled that it was a twenty-foot-long mural that Guggenheim had commissioned from Pollock for the foyer of her East Side town house that really hit him hard. Guggenheim described it as "a continuous band of abstract figures in a rhythmic dance," and recounted how it had been painted in a single night of poured-out inspiration, after Pollock had sat numbly in front of the enormous canvas for weeks. When it was finally completed, the miraculous creation turned out to be too long for the foyer wall, and while Pollock went upstairs to get lost in Guggenheim's liquor supply, the ever-helpful Duchamp calmly proposed cutting eight inches off one end: with this kind of painting, he remarked, it really made no difference.

Which of these myths of modern art appears the more significant—the frenzy of inspiration or the practical adjustment of the dully repetitive result—depends on one's attitude to Pollock's work or, perhaps, to modern art itself. Although she was initially unimpressed, Guggenheim seems to have developed her own purely instinctive response to what she called Pollock's "wild and frightening" painting. She sponsored no other artist so resolutely, no matter who tried to cajole

her into it. Although her financial arrangement with Pollock garnered her a large number of his works, as cynics inevitably point out, she never sold one for more than a thousand dollars. The behavior that she put up with also might be seen as a sign of her commitment. (The story of the victorious mural installation ends, rather famously, with Pollock wandering into a party at Guggenheim's apartment later that night and peeing into the fireplace.) "I dedicated myself to Pollock," she declared, and she came to think of him as her "spiritual offspring."

By the end of the war years, the gallery owner and the critic were virtually the twin engines of the new American painting: she exhibited it, he explained what it meant and why it mattered. During this fraught period, Greenberg made the case that abstract art in New York had become a moral phenomenon, and that it fulfilled on painted canvas many of his early political ideals: the urban concord of Mondrian's "Broadway Boogie Woogie" streetscapes, the defeat of nihilism in Pollock's passionate intensity, a general ascetic standard that stood opposed to the "restless rich" and their complacent way of life. Off the canvas, however, ascetic ideals were not much in evidence. Every night while she lived in New York, Guggenheim liked to claim, she went to bed drunk. After the gallery closed, there were continual parties, where she served cheap Scotch and potato chips to guests who ranged from Joseph Cornell to Gypsy Rose Lee, and where one night Max Ernst angrily overturned an ashtray on Greenberg's head, crowning him King of the Critics, upon which Greenberg promptly socked him in the jaw. Considering the gap between what Greenberg preached and the general uproar that Guggenheim inevitably set in motion, it is difficult to understand how he believed that a memoir by her would aid his cause.

It was Greenberg who encouraged her to get down to work, beginning in the summer of 1944; although Gill claims that he also read each chapter of her book as it emerged, this does not seem likely. Greenberg's review, which appeared under the pseudonym K. Hardesh—Hardesh is Hebrew for Greenberg—in *Commentary*, in 1946, is a furious judgment hurled down from the

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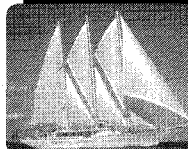
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heights of Sinai. "As a Jew," Greenberg wrote, "I am disturbed in a particular way by this account of the life of another Jew." Although Guggenheim displayed fine critical alertness with regard to the bourgeois world that she had rejected, he wrote, she was incapable of criticizing the bohemian world that she had so gratefully claimed in exchange. Greenberg's few words of praise for Guggenheim were made in a comparison with Gertrude Stein, a woman of similar background who had entered bohemia through literature, while Guggenheim "flew in on money and a kind of vitality that amounts almost to genius."

He didn't carry the comparison any farther, although it is evident that Stein's 1933 memoir, "The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas," was the model for Guggenheim's own Surrealistically naïve tone. And then there were the paintings, the painters, the parties: all the most celebrated elements of Stein's world were reestablished in Guggenheim's, yet Picasso chose to paint Stein's portrait and he threw Guggenheim out of his studio. It was through sheer strength of character that Stein became the Queen of Bohemia—or, as she would have preferred it, the King—while Guggenheim was, in Greenberg's terms, its victim, a position he found troublingly emblematic. "In the list of the martyrs of bohemia, Jewish names stand out," he observed, citing Modigliani and Soutine. He might well have added Guggenheim's cousin Harold Loeb, whose savaging in "The Sun Also Rises" provides the likeliest answer to the mystery of why Stein broke with Hemingway after the book appeared. It is difficult to imagine Guggenheim taking such a stand; indeed, if she was offended by Greenberg's denunciation she never let on. But that, of course, was precisely Greenberg's point.

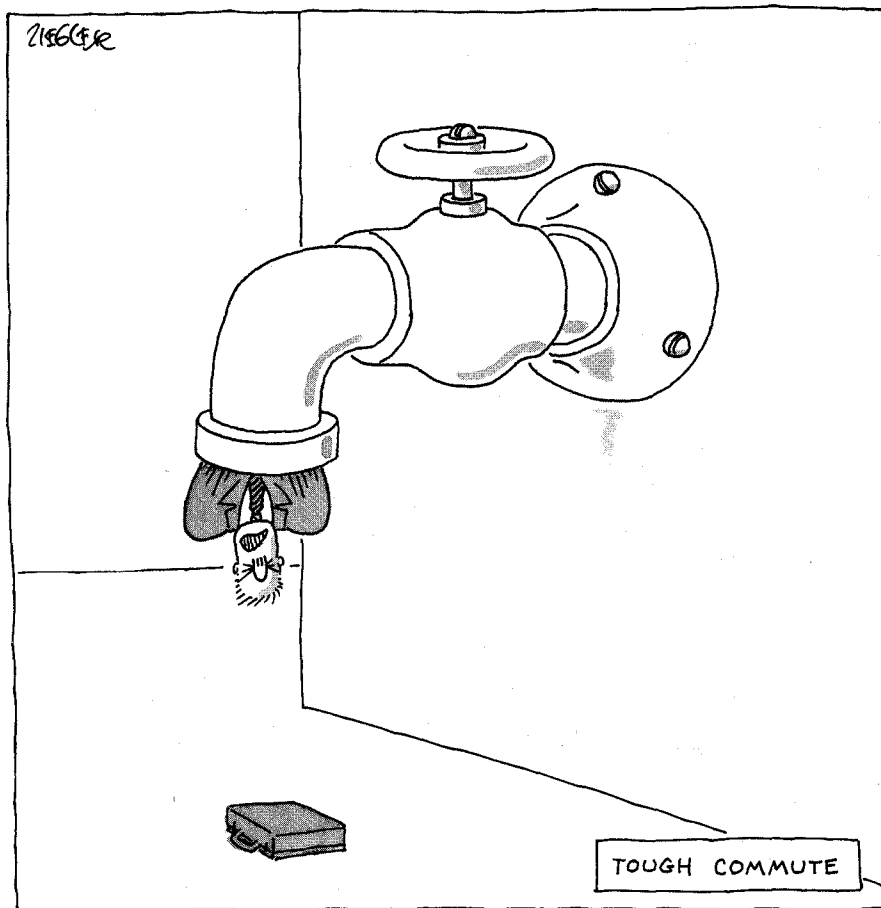
Guggenheim's own view of the possibility of belonging to any sort of world had grown exceedingly bleak. As soon as the war was over, she began looking for a place to live in Venice, having decided that "I would be happy alone there." During her remaining time in New York, she gave a one-woman show to her daughter, Pegeen, now a sad-eyed twenty-year-old waif who painted canvases of wistful little families of blank-faced dolls. And the great collector acquired, at last, a major Picasso, "Girls

with a Toy Boat," which she found "madly amusing." Her main worry in closing up shop was what would become of Pollock—she had raised his monthly payments to two hundred and fifty dollars—and it was with difficulty that she finally secured another gallery's agreement to show his new work if she subsidized him for one more year. The last exhibition at Art of This Century took place in May, 1947. Commemorating its scant five years of existence, Greenberg wrote that Guggenheim's position in history was assured and that her departure was a serious loss to living American art.

"I am where I belong, if anyone belongs anywhere nowadays," Guggenheim wrote to Greenberg from Venice later that year. She had bought an unfinished eighteenth-century palazzo, in which she planned to live quietly with her paintings and her dogs. All ideas of retreat vanished, however, when she was offered an entire pavilion for the display of her collection at the Biennale of 1948, the first international art exhibit there since before the war. This was a major event, and Guggenheim's pavilion was the focus of attention: "the explosion of modern art after the Nazis had tried to kill it," as her Italian secretary later said. Guggenheim was thrilled when Bernard Berenson visited, even if he responded to her avid declaration that he had been the first person to teach her about painting with "My dear, what a tragedy that I wasn't the last." Although she was laying plans to turn her palazzo into a museum, it did not seem likely that many visitors to Venice would come to look at what she had to show.

The real explosion happened the following year. In August, 1949, *Life* ran a story with a banner headline reading, "Jackson Pollock: Is He the Greatest Living Painter in the United States?" Citing the testimony of a single, unnamed but "formidably high-brow New York critic," *Life* ventured to answer with a resounding yes. Moreover, the article featured a large photograph of Pollock dressed in jeans and cowboy boots, a cigarette dangling from his lips, displaying all the allure of the James Dean-style heroes of the approaching fifties. America fell in love with Pollock's image, if not with his art. He was famous, and yet his work remained nearly impossible to sell





until 1956, when he died the quintessential fifties-hero death—in a car crash, drunk, at the age of forty-four—and prices started going through the roof. By that time, however, Guggenheim had long since become incensed over the absence of her name in the stories of his astonishing rise; she complained that Pollock didn't even answer her letters. When Greenberg called from New York with news of his death, she is said to have replied, "I don't give a damn."

She didn't seem to give much of a damn about anything in these years, except, perhaps, sex. At the age of fifty-one, she took up naked sunbathing on the roof of her palazzo—directly across the water from the windows of police headquarters—and developed an attitude to sampling the local men which her friend Mary McCarthy compared to her attitude toward the local olives and crusty bread. She herself was delighted with this image, and when one of her guests inquired, "Mrs. Guggenheim"—as she was known in later years—"how many husbands have you had?" she shot

back, with perfect Mae West timing, "D'you mean my own, or other people's?" Gill is quick to point to the indisputable loneliness and the inability to maintain a relationship that lie behind the pose, but is less ready to allow for the cockeyed bravery that McCarthy put in terms of Guggenheim's "huge, gay, forgiving heart," and which seems to be summed up in Guggenheim's reply to Max Ernst's inquiry about whether he might visit her with his wife. "Come to Venice," her telegram to him read. "All is oblivion."

But even Guggenheim's most trusted methods of achieving oblivion failed her when, in March, 1967, she received the news that her daughter had committed suicide, in her home in Paris, at the age of forty-one. Pegeen, who had four young sons and was in the midst of a stormy second marriage, had consumed a fatal mixture of pills and alcohol. Her husband claimed that he had rescued her from seventeen earlier attempts, but Guggenheim steadfastly refused to believe that the death was not an accident, because "I know she would have never

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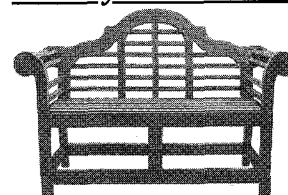
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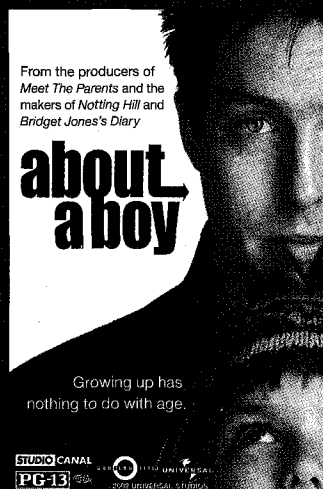
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deserted her children." She was still arguing against the charge of suicide in an updated version of her memoir published in 1979, the year of her death. Although she could rage in her own defense, Guggenheim clearly came to feel that the blame belonged to her alone, as did many people around her. "Sindbad and Laurence once said to me 'You killed Pegeen,'" she admitted in her final years, "and sometimes I think I did."

This brutal assessment is generally supported by Gill's biography, often in interviews with family members for whom her guilt has become established lore—one of Pegeen's sons calls Guggenheim "the major architect of her daughter's pain," although he was only eight when his mother died—but also by the kind of judgments that make one question both the limits of the biographer's knowledge and the extent of his animus. (Guggenheim's "maternal instincts were only ever aroused in the context of a sexual relationship," Gill informs us. Only ever?) Guggenheim's shortcomings as a mother are all too clear, and can perhaps be best understood in terms of her inability to stop being a child herself, but it does seem worth more emphasis than Gill allows that two of Laurence Vail's three daughters by his second wife also attempted suicide, and that, according to interviews with them in Weld's 1986 biography, their father maintained some sort of sexual involvement with both. This isn't to say that Vail ever had an incestuous relationship with Pegeen, but the field of damage in this family was very wide, and the boundaries of childhood were consistently blurred. "We were like two sisters, friends, having lovers," Guggenheim said of her relationship with Pegeen, in her own last years. And she added, "Her death has left me quite bankrupt."

When she was asked in those late years to name her greatest achievement, Guggenheim answered that the first was Pollock and the second was her collection. But the painting that meant the most to her was Picasso's "Girls with a Toy Boat," in which two rather sweet if monstrously misshapen little girls, playing at the ocean's edge, are depicted with protuberant breasts and pregnant bellies. When Guggenheim opened her museum, she placed this painting in the entrance hall, above Giacometti's tabletop

bronze "Woman with Her Throat Cut." It was several years, she pointed out, before she realized that the painting was not funny but disturbing and profound, and that its "poor little girls" were not really enjoying themselves; rather, they were preoccupied with "their destiny as women." She did not specify what she thought this destiny was, but, to judge from her reaction to this image of two childlike sisters or friends, already swollen with their own children, she had lived something like it herself—except that for her the cycle of birth had long been intimately linked with death. In the bedroom of her palazzo, Guggenheim always kept a portrait of herself and Benita as little girls. And even today the visitor to the Guggenheim Museum in Venice will come across a permanent exhibit of the works of Pegeen Vail, a room filled with naïve paintings of detached doll-like figures which serves as a sort of shrine.

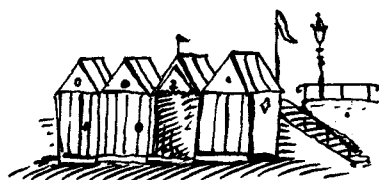
Guggenheim was calmer and quieter in her last years in Venice; she liked to say that floating in a gondola was the nicest thing in her life since she gave up sex. The impulse was never quite vanquished, though. "If she takes your hand, I suggest you let her," Mrs. Alfred Barr advised Saul Steinberg about proper behavior during a gondola ride; it would cost him so little, she said, and would give her so much pleasure. Guggenheim maintained the last privately owned gondola in Venice, and also—in the city that gave the world the word "ghetto"—one of the last privately owned palazzi along the Grand Canal. Instead of the traditional family colors and coat of arms, she displayed her favorite turquoise striped with white, and heraldic images of her Lhasa Apsos, which emerged from local workshops looking like particularly shaggy little lions. She became an honorary Venetian citizen, and year by year she learned virtually all the city's churches and its frescoes, its hundred and fifty canals, and the names of most of its four hundred bridges. Every day, she would glide along in the late-afternoon sun, sometimes accompanied by a famous visitor, but more often alone, as she had predicted when she planned to make Venice her final home. "You fall in love with the city itself," she reported with the sense of an important goal finally achieved. "There is nothing left over in your heart for anyone else." ♦



## BRIEFLY NOTED

Oaxaca Journal, by *Oliver Sacks* (*National Geographic*; \$20). The eminent neurologist is also a fern lover, and this book is his record of a ten-day "fern foray" in southern Mexico. It is light and fast-moving, unburdened by library research but filled with erudition. Some of his fellow-foragers are professional pteridologists; others are amateurs, and there is a certain romance in the sight of smitten fern hunters crawling through the Mexican dust exclaiming in Latin. Among the botanical and anthropological observations, one catches glimpses of Sacks's inner life: his preoccupation with dualities, his nearly Victorian sense of modesty, his fascination with the world around him. He could be speaking of himself when he comments on a colleague peering through a hand lens at a small mountain flower: "Is it the artist or the scientist in him which is aroused by the *Lobelia*? Both, clearly, and they are utterly fused."

Resistance and Betrayal, by *Patrick Marnham* (*Random House*; \$25.95). In 1943, the Gestapo captured Jean Moulin, de Gaulle's chief envoy in France, at a Resistance meeting in Lyons. He was tortured, and he died in captivity. After the war, he became an icon of Resistance courage—in the words of André Malraux, "the face of France." But Marnham's intricate and suspenseful reconstruction suggests that the resemblance was not entirely flattering. Moulin—a shrewd civil servant, sometime Freemason, fellow-traveller, and arms smuggler—embodied several of the political crosscurrents of interwar France, and his betrayal was probably the result of complex power struggles within the Resistance itself. Perhaps tellingly, the coffin placed with great ceremony in the Panthéon in 1964 did not contain Moulin, whose body was never found: "Lacking a body they reburied a ghost, and a patriotic legend was born."



Leopards in the Temple, by *Morris Dickstein* (*Harvard*; \$15.95). In this sharply sketched history of American fiction in the postwar years, Dickstein upends prevailing caricatures, showing that the culture of the fifties was "highly self-critical . . . and alive with change at the margins," and that the new American novel epitomized the era. Writers who once would have been considered "outsiders"—Ellison, Baldwin, Bellow, Roth, and Mailer—became central, producing works that fused the novel's traditional emphasis on the social with a newfound fascination with the psychological. Kerouac and Salinger reinvigorated first-person narrative while writers like Updike and Yates explored spiritual doubt in suburbia. Dickstein's criticism is pointed without being harsh, and he is alive to the pleasures that even flawed works can provide. Most impressively, he uses history to illuminate fiction, and vice versa, but never forgets to keep the two realms separate.

Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda, edited by *Jackson R. Bryer and Cathy W. Barks* (*St. Martin's*; \$27.95). These letters, many never before published, suggest that Scott and Zelda were both, at heart, Protestants, not voluptuaries; what comes through most clearly in this collection is their dogged, back-bowed faith in work and their dependence on each other. When, in 1918, a young lieutenant with literary pretensions began courting a Montgomery coquette, a fervid correspondence was launched. Scott, a compulsive archivist, saved his wife's letters; most of the ones he sent Zelda have been lost. Luckily, Zelda is an extravagant and funny correspondent, and watching her transformation from ingenue ("I love being rather unfathomable") to survivor is heart-rending. In 1939, the year before his death, she wrote her husband, "I am always loyal to the concepts that held us together so long: the belief that life is tragic, that a man's spiritual reward is the keeping of his faith: that we shouldn't hurt each other. . . . Nothing could have survived our life."

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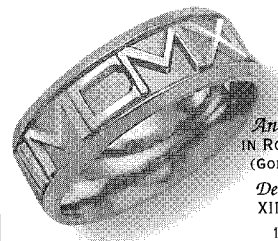
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## TANGLED WEBS

*"Spider-Man" and "The Lady and the Duke."*

BY ANTHONY LANE

What happens to movies? Whom should we blame when a big studio picture goes astray, or does it have an entropy of its own? To be specific: how come "Spider-Man" begins in such good humor and ends, like Eensy-Weensy, completely up the spout? The opening credits throw themselves into position with an off-kilter, nineteen-fifties brio; the Saul Bass who put together the title sequence of "Vertigo" would have looked on with approval. Then we are tipped straight into Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire). "This story, like all stories worth telling," he informs us, "is all about a girl." True enough, especially when the girl in question, Mary Jane, is played by Kirsten Dunst, who gives a dreamy, near-perfect impersonation of someone who *really* doesn't mind having to dye her hair red for the sake of a movie.

Peter is a supergeek. This we know because he wears spectacles, runs for the bus, and aces science. In short, he is crying out for an alternative personality. (So many comic-book heroes turn out to be extended riffs on the before-and-after promise of a Charles Atlas advertisement.) His wish is granted when a genetically modified spider nips him on the hand during a school trip; back home, where he lives with his uncle (Cliff Robertson) and aunt (Rosemary Harris), Peter enjoys a refreshing sleep and wakes up with an improved physique, sharpened vision, and an overwhelming desire to clamber out of people's drains when they're about to run a bath.

There is, it emerges, nothing disgusting about becoming an arachnanthrope. Peter fails, for instance, to sprout a further quartet of limbs or a funky tarantula fuzz on his upper thighs. His cutest new knack is for ejecting long, twangy threads of sticky stuff from his wrists; there is, perhaps, a happy touch of Portnoy to this unfamiliar gift, and I think that Maguire is wise to it. Certainly, the smartest scene in the movie

comes when, full of the joys of his spring, he leaps onto a roof and tries, for the first time, to shoot his silk into the void. "Go, web, go!" the desperate teenager cries, madly flipping his hand back and forth. Hmmm. Maguire is much the best thing about the film. The more those millions of comic-book addicts (Where are they all? Do we get to see them in daylight?) fretted online that he might be wrong for the part, the more I knew that he was right, not least because it is the essence of Peter to worry whether he deserves the role of hero. The glum-nervy smile, the side-long glance of the slightly bug eyes, that modest arching of the brows: all the Maguire tics were ready to roll, and there is something absurdly winning in Peter's expression as he realizes what heights he is now at liberty to scale. With so much in prospect, he is almost afraid of himself.

The trouble with the older comic-book ethics is that they have a simple, thudding solution to this dilemma: civic duty. As Peter's uncle puts it, "With great power comes great responsibility." Not so. With great power comes a great ability to check out the view from the top of the Chrysler Building without having to wait for the elevator. The director of "Spider-Man," Sam Raimi, has enough B-movie serum in his bloodstream to know what manner of kicks we want from this picture; we want to see Peter swing down the avenues on long, looping arcs of thread, a trapeze of his own devising, like a flying Sinatra. It may be the hippest method ever devised for beating traffic. No wonder you can feel Raimi losing interest in the project, if not losing the plot, as Spider-Man is forced to quit horsing around and start battling for the soul of New York. Worse still, a nemesis arrives in the form of a rich scientist named Norman Osborn (Willem Dafoe), who suffers a regrettable incident in his laboratory involving Oz-style

smoke. From this he emerges as the Green Goblin, an airborne lump of id in a safety helmet. "Forty thousand years of human evolution and we've barely even tapped the vastness of human potential," he declares. A hundred years of cinema, on the other hand, and we've barely progressed beyond the stage where the villain is asked to signify evil by laughing like a jackass.

And so the movie, with spiderlike timidity, scuttles into a corner and freezes. The second half could have been made by a committee: as ill-fitting sequences come and go, we get a loud, anachronistic parody of a newspaper editor; we get Spider-Man saving a baby from a burning house (Is that truly the best that anyone could do?), and we get an attempted rape scene that segues with inadvisable haste into a Wet Tank Top scene. We even get Willem Dafoe bringing a cake to a Thanksgiving dinner and storming out with the words "Enjoy the fruitcake," as if we hadn't already been enjoying him for the last hour and a half. He gets his comeuppance, of course, in the form of a large steel blade puncturing his lower abdomen and groin. Contrast this with the delight on Peter's face as he peeks down his shorts on the morning after the bug bite, and you wonder what kind of hormonal power play is going on here. All the more reason for Peter to accept Mary Jane's love when she offers it at the close. Instead, he outs himself as a good friend and strides away to continue his manly task. What are you *doing*, Pete? Why not spirit her to the rooftops and make hundreds of spider babies? The answer, I fear, is the need for sequels. Once you're glued to a worldwide web, it's hard to get off.

Scene for scene, "The Lady and the Duke" may be even heavier on the special effects than "Spider-Man." This is surprising, given that the action takes place during the French Revolution and that the director is Eric Rohmer, whose creations have traditionally been about as effect-free as it is possible for movies to be. Now, at the sprightly age of eighty-two, he has decided to junk the habit of photographing the real Paris in favor of a computerized rejig; his characters, shot on digital video, stroll not through existing streets but against a painted backdrop. There is only the barest nod to





naturalism; these figures are more like cutouts, sliding along the grooves of a children's pop-up book, than creatures of the flesh. The lady of the title is Grace Elliott (Lucy Russell), who lived and thrived in France despite clinging to the unfashionable belief that social acquaintances are nicer to talk to with their heads still attached. This provokes much comment from her admirer, the portly Duke of Orléans (Jean-Claude Dreyfus), a man of such unyielding rectitude that he votes for the execution of the King rather than cause a fuss.

JEAN-PHILIPPE DELHOMME

The moral of the tale is that a friendship can survive anything, including the

tremors of political disagreement. I guess so, but the line between the dispassionate and the dull can be ominously faint, and when Rohmer kicks off his film with ten or fifteen minutes of solid anecdotal chat, you fear for the stamina of the audience. As for the technological innovations, they somehow rack up the staginess of the whole affair and encourage the actors, stuck with elaborate lines, to deliver them as if they had raced over from the Comédie-Française. Only in the second half of the film does the blood begin to flow—literally so, as portions of fresh aristocrat are served up on skewers, with the crowd baying for uni-

versal justice and béarnaise sauce. There are a couple of great scenes in Grace's bedroom, which is invaded by jostling platoons of republican guards, rabid for proof of her disloyalty to the new regime. Just look at one of the men who come to interrogate her—squat, pie-faced and piggy-eyed, donning a ridiculous sash before placing her under arrest. The history of all nations is littered with rent-a-creeps of his description. Scan the mob that rallies around Jean-Marie Le Pen, for example, and you will see a hundred such hangers-on—tasting the air of ersatz authority and finding it thrillingly sweet. ♦



# ORPHEUS ASCENDING

*Monteverdi triumphs in Brooklyn.*

BY ALEX ROSS

Portraits of Claudio Monteverdi show a pale, stern man with vaguely haunted eyes. He could be mistaken for a Renaissance prelate of intellectual bent, one who tried to keep the world and its pleasures at a distance. This ascetic-looking character was, in fact, the godfather of opera in all its Dionysian delirium. Last month, the Brooklyn Academy of Music mounted a festival of the three great Monteverdi operas: "Orfeo," in a production from the Chicago Opera Theatre; "The Coronation of Poppea," from the Dutch National Opera; and, best of all, "The Return of Ulysses," from the Aix-en-Provence Festival, with William Christie and the musicians of Les Arts Florissants. At each performance I attended—there were thirteen performances in all—a full house responded with raucous cheers. Not a bad New York run for a four-hundred-and-thirty-four-year-old composer.

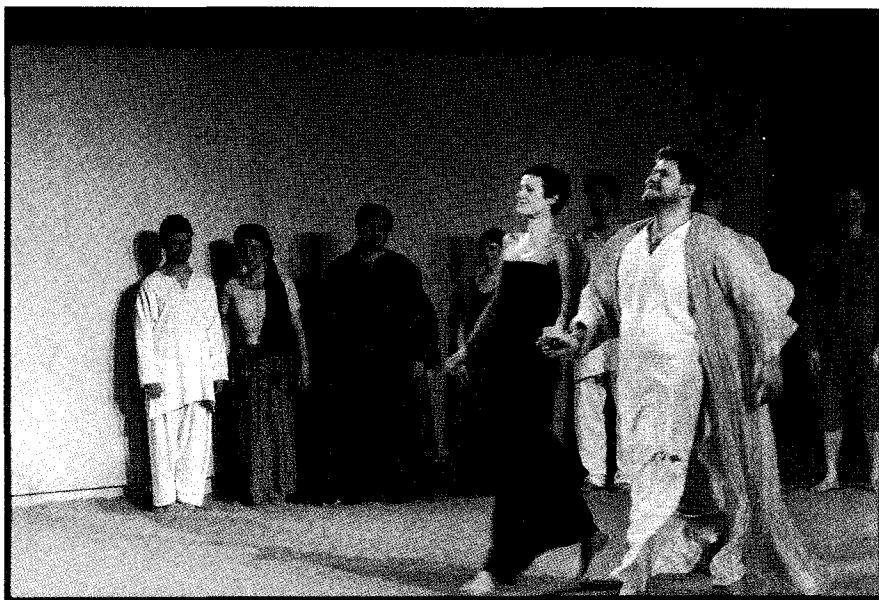
Did Monteverdi invent opera? Technically, no; practically, yes. Opera had existed for only a decade when the composer produced "Orfeo," in 1607, and he was the first to draw perfection from the form. By 1600, the theory of music drama had fallen into place; for decades, progressive scholars, among them Vincenzo Galilei, the father of Galileo, had been urging composers to abandon the arcana of counterpoint in favor of a more expressive, single-voiced style. The pioneers of Florentine opera fashioned a method of recitative singing which allowed for the exposition of plot between arias. But the earliest operas lacked narrative drive; after a while, the recitatives tended to exhaust the ears. Monteverdi, who was already writing quasi-operatic scenes in madrigal form, electrified the genre with the force of his personality. Conversational melodic lines, commanding interval leaps, sharp rhythmic contrasts, abrupt chord changes, biting dissonances, ominous roving

basses—all spell out the violence of Orpheus' emotions as he descends into the underworld.

Having begun at the summit, Monteverdi followed opera as it evolved from an aristocratic to a popular art. "Orfeo" was written for the elder son of the Duke of Mantua, and it appealed directly to the taste of a refined young no-

fray, and at the time of his death, in 1643, he was writing prolifically for the annual carnival season.

The earthy magnificence of "Ulysses" and "Poppea" points up a central fact of Monteverdi's work: every device, no matter how innovative, has a specific theatrical weight. Those Stravinskian dissonances echo the wildness of a rural band, in which players go their separate ways over a common ground. The surprise modulations, pivoting rapidly on a fixed tone, mimic the waywardness of an actor in the throes of passion. The famous lamenting basses—still a fixture of pop music—are X-rays of a shattered heart. (Sade's recent hit "By Your Side," with its four-note descending bass, is very Monteverdi-like.) The composer



*Marijana Mijanovic, as Penelope, and Kresimir Spicer, as Ulysses, at BAM.*

bleman; Orpheus' sensuously spiralling lamentations mirrored the fad for melancholy in the Renaissance. "Ulysses" and "Poppea" were composed decades later, in Venice, for a much different audience. By the sixteen-thirties, opera had grown so popular that a public opera house had opened in the heart of Venice, and, under new commercial pressures, composers began to incorporate the conventions of bawdy farce. Women played boys, young men played old women, servants cackled at emperors. Monteverdi, by this time the music director of St. Mark's, held himself aloof from the public opera at first, as was probably expected of a great man in his seventies. But he soon returned to the

embraces everything—the low comic and the high tragic, street theatre and psychodrama. What is great in Monteverdi cannot be separated from what is popular. This is the ultimate legacy of opera's founding master.

Les Arts Florissants' vibrant performance of "The Return of Ulysses" gave a sense of what it must have been like to witness a Monteverdi masterpiece amid the chaos of a Venice carnival. The freedom of the playing was thrilling: Les Arts seemed to be making up the score as it went along. William Christie, who founded this now legendary early-music institution in 1979, did almost nothing in the way of traditional conducting,

SYLVIA PLACHY



keeping busy with the harpsichord, organ, and regals. In a recent interview with the online magazine *Andante*, Christie said that he modelled his ensemble on Duke Ellington's orchestra of 1929, and the comparison, however presumptuous, rang true. Like jazz soloists, his players ambled in and out of the musical spotlight, adding daubs of color before rejoining the velvet background. There were only sixteen musicians, but they easily filled the Harvey Theatre with their sound.

The cast was a throng of expert unknowns. The Croatian tenor Kresimir Spicer, in the role of Ulysses, was a robust, charismatic presence, sounding like Bryn Terfel in the powerful lower end of his voice. Marijana Mijanovic, as the long-suffering Penelope, was statuesque, coldly glamorous, a picture of contained rage. Her mezzo had a laser-like clarity in all registers. I also liked Zachary Stains, a commanding tenor with charm to burn; Cyril Auvity, an ardently lyrical Telemachus; and Olga Pitarch, a crystalline-voiced, sensuous Athena. Robert Burt feasted on the farcical role of Iro and brought down the house with his Act III solo. In true carnival spirit, he scampered uproariously around the auditorium, stopping at one point to give Christie a hug.

The staging was as fresh as the singing. Anthony Ward provided simple, handsome, pastel-toned sets. When the gods of Olympus descended on magic carpets to comment on the action, they managed to be both majestic and whimsical, in harmony with the spirit of the piece. The director, Adrian Noble, the retiring head of the Royal Shakespeare Company, gave the action an entrancing naturalness; there was none of the campiness, mockery, or self-consciousness that so often mars Baroque revivals. Even when silent, the singers were a delight to watch—Ulysses winking at Telemachus, for example, as the suitors tried to draw his bow. The entire show blazed with life.

**P**oppea," a turbulent and sardonic tale of sexual intrigue in the court of the emperor Nero, had less luck, in the hands of the Dutch National Opera. The production defused the social and psychological tensions of the piece by dressing all the characters in kooky cos-

tumes and marooning them in Martian landscapes. The countertenor Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, as Arnalta, was somehow able to sing long phrases with immaculate diction while balancing a Skylab-like object on his head. He resembled the high priest of one of those tragic civilizations that the "Star Trek" crew used to find on their travels. Others who succeeded in transcending the avant-garde fashion-show atmosphere were Brigitte Balleys, a strident but effective Nero, and Sandrine Piau, a finely shaded Drusilla. The Talens Lyrique ensemble, led by Christophe Rousset, produced a beautiful haze of sound in the cavern of the BAM Opera House.

The Chicago Opera Theatre's "Orfeo" had more life in it, even if this show also suffered from directoritis. The action unfolded at a modern-dress masked ball, with Orpheus as a kind of aging pop star whose intensity amuses the aristocrats. Intriguing in the opening scenes, the concept made nonsense of the climax: if the underworld is merely an extension of the chic world above, why should Orpheus suffer such agonies trying to bring his Eurydice out of it? Laurence Dale, a twenty-year veteran of the title role, gave focus to the evening with his strongly projected, elegantly ornamented tenor. Amid a host of worthy supporting singers, Kathleen Flynn stood out as the Messenger; she had a lush mezzo voice and hidden reserves of power. The conductor, Jane Glover, drew a wealth of color and detail from the Newberry Consort players. Alison Attar's harp solo deserves special mention.

Even if Monteverdi's later operas have more urgency, "Orfeo" is the most ravishing and riveting of the cycle. As I listened, I kept hearing foreshadowings of future music: a hint of the finale of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony in the rising flourishes of the Prologue; a premonition of Tristan's death in the chilling chords that mark the passing of Eurydice; a "Lohengrin"-esque turn around the words "your beautiful Eurydice"; a touch of Barber's Adagio in the sobbing of the strings. Given that "Orfeo" was seldom performed until the late twentieth century, these echoes are probably not conscious ones; rather, they seem to come from a communal source, a well-spring of passion and lament. Monteverdi found it, took it, let it flow. ♦

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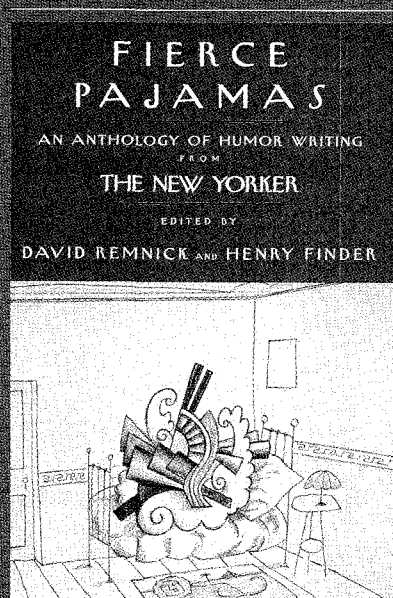


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## THE THEATRE

# **BACK TO THE WOODS**

*Witches, wolves, and wish fulfillment.*

BY NANCY FRANKLIN



*Vanessa Williams casts a spell in the revival of Sondheim and Lapine's 1987 musical.*

It is a coincidence that the first Broadway revival of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale-derived musical "Into the Woods" has arrived in New York, at the Broadhurst, at this particular moment, but the timing could not have been better. Worn out by the events of the past eight months and by all the mayoral exhortations to get back to normal (and things *are* back to normal: the souvenir shops in Times Square are already selling postcards of the World Trade Center on fire and collapsing), New Yorkers may find "Into the Woods" to be a balm and a comfort right now—not because it sidesteps difficult matters but because it doesn't. It has a refreshing directness and simplicity (even if the overly busy plot is sometimes hard to follow) that suit the archetypal material, and yet it lacks none of the intelligence or emotional honesty we expect from Sondheim.

Drawing on classic fables of escapism and wish fulfillment (and informed by

Bruno Bettelheim's 1976 psychoanalytic exploration of fairy tales, "The Uses of Enchantment," among other sources), "Into the Woods" isn't so much a rethinking of fairy tales as a thinking-through of them—in the first act, we see wishes coming true, and in the second we see the consequences of those wishes. The show is a parable about growing up and finding your place in the community, and about learning to live with uncertainty and ambivalence. (The night I saw "Into the Woods," the audience was more than usually aware of the community involved in actually putting on a show: at curtain time, James Lapine came onstage to tell us that the building in Chelsea where an explosion had occurred earlier that day, injuring several dozen people, had housed one of the show's costume shops, and he thanked the staff for scrambling to ready rehearsal costumes for that night's performance.) As Little Red Riding Hood, who starts out not innocent but merely

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blithely ignorant (Lapine and Sondheim are not softheaded about the nature of childhood), says after she has been awakened to life's dangers and excitements by her lupine encounter, "Isn't it nice to know a lot! And a little bit not."

"Into the Woods" weaves together the stories of Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Rapunzel, and adds one invented by Lapine, about a baker and his wife. At the beginning of the show, the characters emerge from behind huge leather-and-gilt storybooks, which open to show old-fashioned illustrations, and express their wishes. Cinderella (the lovely-voiced Laura Benanti) wants to go to the king's festival; the baker and his wife (Stephen DeRosa and Kerry O'Malley) want a child; Jack (Adam Wylie) wishes that his cow, Milky-White (it was inanimate in the 1987 production, but this time around it's a very animate man in a very expressive cow suit), would give milk; and Jack's mother (Marylouise Burke) wishes "a lot of things," including that her son "were not a fool." The narrator, in the person of John McMartin (Lapine, who directed this production and the one fifteen years ago, originally envisioned Walter Cronkite in this role), sets up the stories, but it is the witch who lives next door to the baker and his wife who sets them in motion. As the witch, the glamorous Vanessa Williams is unrecognizably ghastly-looking—she has a hump the size of a five-year-old child on her back underneath a voluminous, garish dress; her face is deformed; and her hair is a scary spray of gray. Because the baker's father once stole from her garden, she claimed his daughter and, on top of that, put a spell on his house. To undo the curse on his father's house—to be able to have a child himself—the baker must bring her four things, all of which are in the possession of the other characters, and off he goes into the woods. (In a kind of joke about men who won't ask for directions—fairy tales are, of course, often elaborations of such jokes, tallies of the wages of stubbornness—the take-charge baker forbids his wife to accompany him but then needs her to remind him what exactly it is that he's supposed to bring back.)

The witch is the most vivid character in "Into the Woods," and, oddly, the most sympathetic. She isn't trying to get something; she's trying desperately to keep

something she already has—her stolen daughter, Rapunzel. In a new song (new to New York, that is; it was used in the 1990 London production of the show) called "Our Little World," she dramatizes the paradox of parenthood: that to hold on to your children you have to let them go. While Rapunzel (Melissa Dye) is trapped in a tower of the witch's devising (the tower is one of those huge storybooks, and Rapunzel stands in a cutout space at the top of the spine), the witch sings, "Children are a blessing, if you know where they are." Rapunzel, who has never seen anything of the outside world, answers her with "Our little world is big enough for me. Our little world is all it needs to be." The witch repeats the word "perfect," saying it first with love and contentment, then as if she were warning her daughter not to do anything to disturb that perfection. At the end of the song, after the witch has climbed up Rapunzel's hair, they sing the word together in hideous harmony, in illustration of two lives twisted by a lonely woman's wish that nothing will ever change.

It's only a matter of time before Rapunzel is rescued by her prince and Cinderella by hers, and it's only a matter of time before fulfillment breeds discontent: in the first act, the two princes (played by Gregg Edelman and Christopher Sieber as prize putzes) sing a duet ("Agony") about the objects of their desire being just out of reach, and in the second they reprise the song, only this time their attention, having been held but briefly by the women they worked so hard to win, has turned to *other* women, rendered more desirable by their unattainability. "I must have her to wife" has become "Ah, well, back to my wife." And so it goes: as soon as the characters get what they want, they find something else to wish for. But when death—the reality principle—comes to the woods in the second act, Sondheim brings not just wit but also depth and gravity to the archetypes. The song "No One Is Alone" is a summation of the journey through the woods, and it's one of Sondheim's most beautiful melodies. Not an unconvincing piece of bombast like Rodgers and Hammerstein's "You'll Never Walk Alone," the song is a call to adulthood, and it makes the case for shouldering life's troubles: that's where the rewards are. Cinderella sings to Little Red Rid-

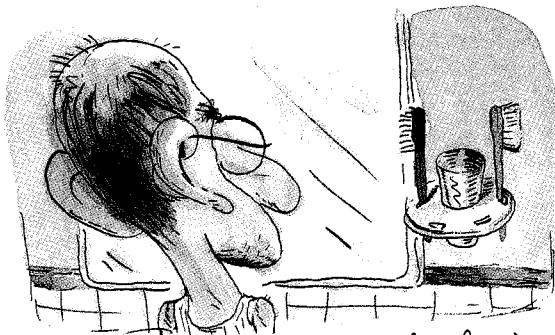
ing Hood, "Sometimes people leave you halfway through the wood. Others may deceive you. You decide what's good." Through the magic of his music and lyrics, Sondheim, the bard of loneliness and isolation, has taken these fantasies of enchantment and turned them into a celebration of engagement.

As if in counterpoint to the oppressively dark set of "The Crucible," running at the Virginia Theatre, the set of "The Man Who Had All the Luck," another Arthur Miller play, which just opened at the Roundabout's American Airlines Theatre, is all light and air; you can see bright-blue Midwestern sky through the high slats of pale wood that form the wall at the back of the stage. There is light on the stage, too; you sense that this beautifully cast production, directed by Scott Ellis, illuminates Miller's play as fully as it is possible to do. Subtitled "A Fable," "The Man Who Had All the Luck," which was Miller's first Broadway play—it ran for just four performances, in 1944—is about a young auto mechanic named David Beeves (Chris O'Donnell), who can't accept his good fortune in life, because he doesn't think he's done anything to deserve it. David can do no wrong, and no wrong comes to him: his girlfriend's father, who has threatened to kill him, conveniently dies in a car accident; a more experienced mechanic (the touching Sam Robards) moves to town to set up shop, and instead of putting David out of business he ends up working for him. On the other hand, David's older brother, Amos (Ryan Shively), an apparently talented baseball player, doesn't seem to have any luck at all: each year, the major leagues fail to come calling.

There are faint echoes of "All My Sons" here, and louder echoes of "Death of a Salesman"—it turns out that David and Amos's father (James Rebhorn), in imposing his own dreams on Amos, caused irreparable damage to him. And there is a life-insurance policy, though here it is not a fateful one. "The Man Who Had All the Luck" asks whether what happens to us is the result of character or of luck, and whether character itself is a matter of luck. That the play doesn't try to answer the question is why, after fifty-eight years, it still has plenty of life in it. ♦

# SAVING FACE

A CONTEMPORARY FOLKTALE



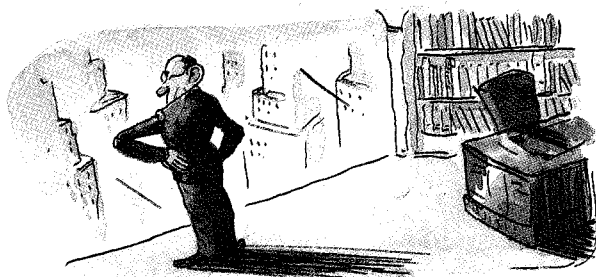
One day, Alan Greenspan decides to get Botoxed — he's generally happy with his lot, but he figures, Why not?



But wait! People soon notice that his famous scowl is gone.



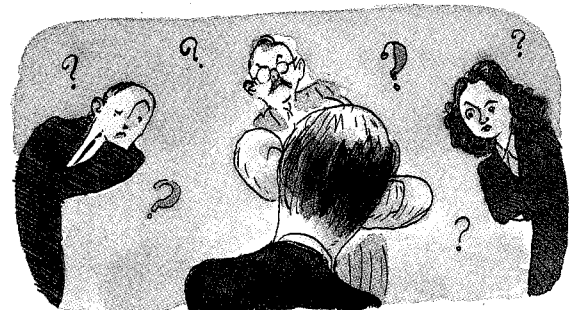
Without visual cues, the financial markets began to go haywire.



But the Botox soon wears off, and Greenspan wisely puts the whole thing behind him.



So, anyway, he has it done, and it goes well, and he looks great!



As a matter of fact, no one can read his facial expressions at all!



Before long, the country's economy lies in utter shambles!



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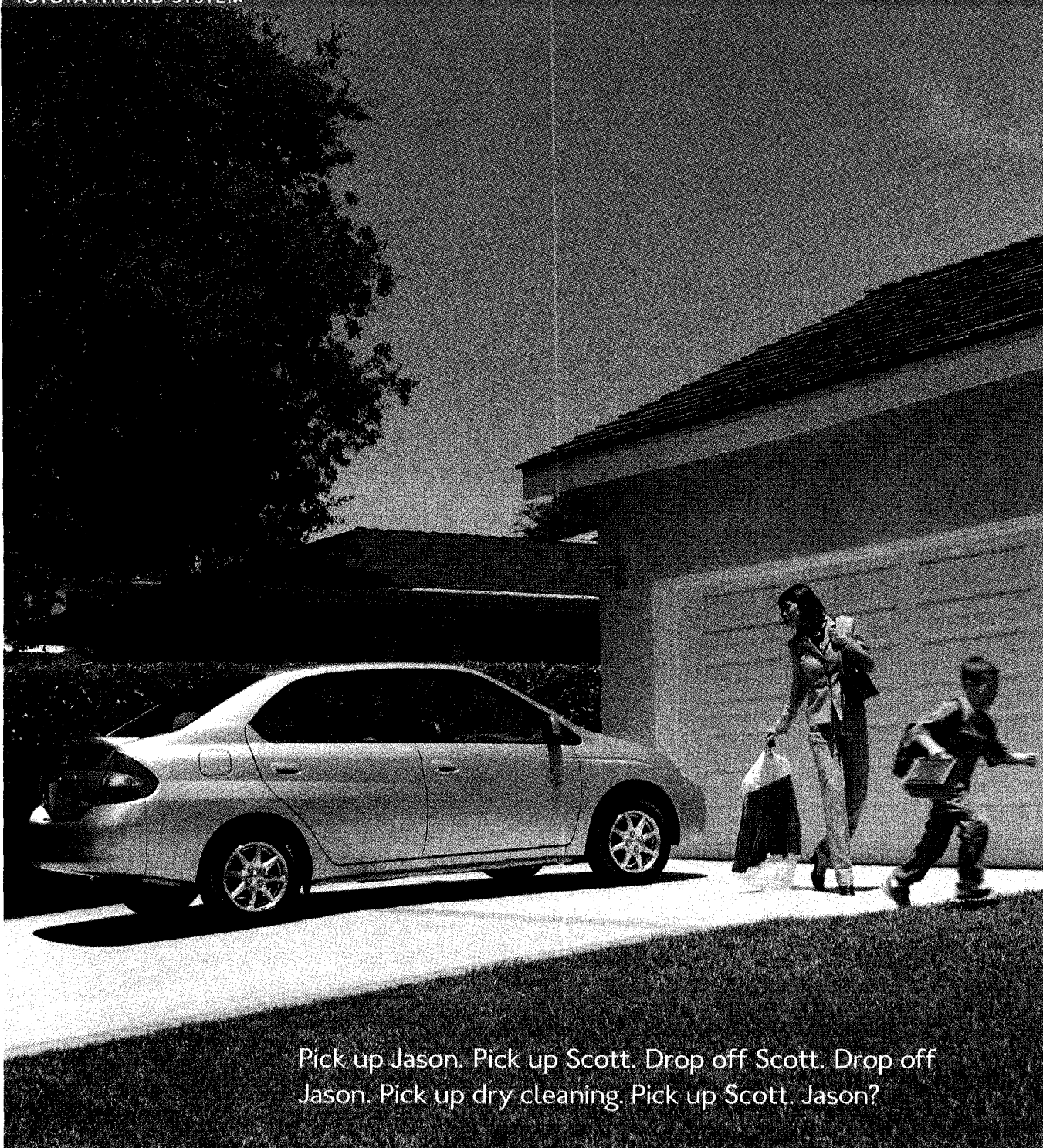
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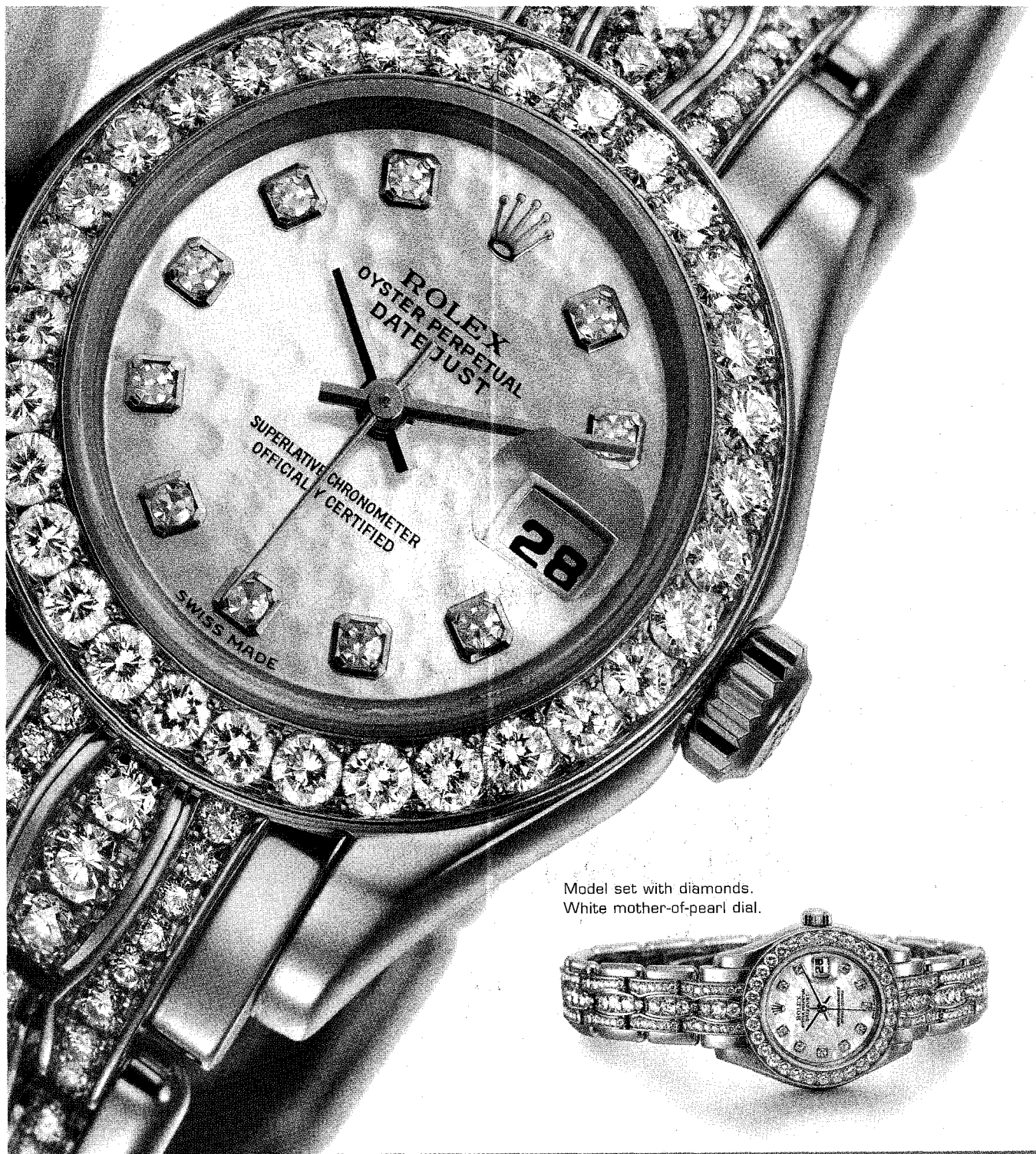


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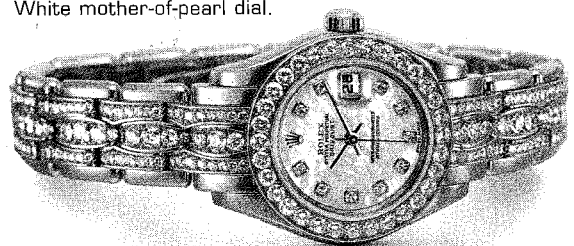
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